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SCOPE OF OIL, GAS FIELD DEVELOPMENT ASSESSED

Paris LE MONDE in French 27-28 Feb 83 p 4

/Article by special correspondent Jean de la Gueriviere: "The Algerian Sahara's Vintage Crude Oil"/

/Text/ The drop in oil prices is making some people happy. But in Algeria it can only disappoint and irritate a large producer since, according to /the Algerian daily/ AL MOUDJAHID, it runs "counter to all the demands of the Third World." That is why Algiers requested this week that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) hold a meeting.

Algeria does not wish to sell its vintage crude oil, whose inventories are impressive, at bargain prices.

In Amenas--The great adventure of Saharan oil began not far from here, at well No 101, drilled before what is modestly referred to in the presence of French guests as "the events." It takes an hour's drive to reach Edjeleh, near the Libyan border, in a landscape of sandy dunes. One can see a few pipes emerging from the ground, an area delimited by four oil barrels, and an inscription reading: "Edjeleh, first oil, January 1956." Involved are not only piously preserved memorabilia. While patting affectionately these artifacts which have resisted all forms of corrosion an engineer explained: "Well No 101 is closed but it is not dry." It would still be possible "to squeeze the sponge" to extract more of the precious flow from it by using the gas lift technique.

The imagery-laden and concrete language of oilmen often borrows from that of Texas. Since the gas lift technique was perfected by Americans, it will never be possible to ever speak otherwise of the process which consists in injecting gas under the oil in order to "lift" it, thus improving the yield of deposits whose easiest stage of exploitation is now past.

Anxious not to squander its reserves, Algeria is interested in every technique of "optimization." Gas is reinjected, but so is water--which may be found if one bores 1,000 meters down--using measured amounts. "Every well is a

different case and has its history," observed an engineer specializing in studies of "tertiary recuperation" underway in Algeria to produce a special liquid substance that will make it possible to exploit the deposits without wasting the least drop of oil "trapped" in the rock formation.

At the present rate of production it is generally thought that oil reserves in Algeria should be exhausted in 20 years. The experts of SONATRACH (National Company for the Exploration, Production, Transport, Processing, and Marketing of Hydrocarbons) feel that these estimates are simplistic: Everything depends, they hold, on the evolution of knowledge and efficiency of the most complex techniques.

In Amenas, a subprefecture (da'irah) of 13,000 inhabitants, is first and foremost an administrative and residential center, a "living base," as the oilmen call it. In addition to the technicians and their families one finds here the nomads or semi-nomads who follow the workyards and secure temporary employment there.

"The Tuareg are our best drivers, especially at night when it is easy to stray." The engineer showed us the immense workyards: They are near the Bourharet erg /sandhill/ where the Algerian Army is upgrading the track into a road. The arrival of our vehicle represented a small event for the 60 or so men who work at El Abed-Larache, the last base in the south, 117 km from In Amenas. A few "Saharan huts" are located in a desolate stony landscape. Its eating facility was built in 1960. The French have left, but pictures of ports in Brittany have remained on the walls, and games of bowls are still in fashion. There are neither television nor telephones: A few open air film shows in the evening and the nostalgia for womenfolk left behind in the north fill in the men's leisure hours. The workers' "isolation bonus" which doubles their pay is not a free lunch either if one adds to it the psychic income they enjoy stemming from their pride in being part of an elite, of belonging to an efficient corps in an Algeria where generalized "hassling" is the name of the game.

"Some 4 km away, driving along a track to the right, one comes upon a warm water point, an agreeable camp site despite the possible existence of scorpions," the French Blue Guide indicates. In fact, SONATRACH exploits here a "source" which serves to supply water to all living bases in southern Algeria. Drawn from 1,400 meters underground, the water is 62° centigrade when it reaches the surface. After cooling, it is placed in containers easy to transport and used at workyards where, in summer, a human body needs at least 5 liters of water a day.

More to the south is Illizi where Antonioni shot the first sequences of his movie, "Profession Reporter," and then Djanet, the Tassili area and its rocky scenery not easily accessible to the ordinary traveler. SONATRACH knows how to treat its guests in royal manner but its true domain extends to the north.

Primitive Buildings

Hassi Messaoud. This center yeilds more than half of Algeria's crude oil production. It has 600 wells of which 400 are in operation. It contains

5 billion tons of reserves on the site. Recent discoveries have encouraged prospecting, evidenced by a landscape of oil derricks. The community numbers 20,000, 15,000 of whom work for SONATRACH. The organization chart is one of extreme complexity, increased by the breaking up of SONATRACH, a state within a state, into various national companies.

The gas is removed from the crude oil by successive decompressions. The oil is stabilized by electrostatic desalination. The gas is compressed once again for reinjecting into the deposit. These operations are most often carried out by remote control from a "control tower." And then, as he emerges from the air-conditioned rooms housing the computers, the visitor returns to the good old routine used in the 1960's: At the conclusion of a visit to a refinery, some faucets are opened so that the visitor may smell, the way he would some wines, kerosene, high-test gasoline, diesel oil, lighting oil, and other varieties.

The students at the training center of the Algerian Petroleum Institute are recruited on the basis of a test administered to them at the conclusion of their secondary school education. Some 4,000 candidates who apply yield a class of 450 trainees. The discipline is rigorous: They are subject to 1 dinar's fine for every minute they are late showing up for class deducted from a monthly pay of 1,000 dinars (equivalent to 1,500 francs). Their beds are laid out in a square configuration. In the middle of the courtyard there is a "Christmas tree," the name given to wellheads emerging from the sand and used for instructional purposes.

"The principal resource of the Sahara is its water," a gardener who grows asparagus at the experimental farm said without smiling. Grafting is done there, rabbits are raised, and at dawn the crowing of the rooster breaks the great silence of the desert.

A Fascinating Spectacle

In short order one could hear the chant of the muezzin [*prayer crier*]. A mosque is being built next to the schools. The population, basically young, has more and more children. Hassi Messaoud is becoming a full-fledged city where some families take their vacations. An old hand announced his intention to remain there after he retires. An Algerian bachelor is on a "three-one" system there, working for 3 weeks very hard and then having a week off to spend with his family, whom he joins by flying at the expense of his employer.

The few French employees from Total or Elf-Aquitaine on loan to SONATRACH work under the "four-two" system, with their time off spent in France. "This is a privilege which naturally has counterparts but one which I cannot manage to give up," one of these employees noted. He will complete his month with his family in the Poitou region of France.

An attempt is being made to humanize this desert site named after one Messaoud when he dug a well, still in evidence, in 1910. On the shoulder of the major asphalted roads built for the gigantic trucks of the special convoys, inscriptions give names designed to be suggestive: Quatre Chemins, Chapeau de gendarme.

Hassi Messaoud is really attractive only by night. It reflects the beauty of the industrial universe when floodlights focus on the "optimization unit," a gigantic still for high-grade fuels, brand new, designed by France and built by Algeria. The romanticism of the flaring wellheads will have disappeared in a few years when all the gas, now flared for the sake of safety, will be recycled into the deposits, the engineer noted half-proud, half-regretful. Even at midnight, fascinated as he was the first day, the latter could not make up his mind to get into his jeep and drive back to his "living base."

After the splendors of the Mzab region, sunrise over Ghardaia and the oases, which separate it from Hassi Messaoud, Hassi R'Mel, located on a rocky and wind-blown plateau, seems to be little spoilt by nature. Yet, it is the Fort Knox of Algeria. It contains 2.4 trillion cubic meters of natural gas at 2,300 meters underground in an exploitation zone that is 80 km long and 70 km wide.

Algeria has the world's fourth largest deposit of natural gas. At the present rate, its production could last for 3 centuries. Eight percent of Algeria's national reserves are located in the triassic sandstone of Hassi R'Mel. Because of its humidity one finds gas condensates there, this colorless hydrocarbon liquid, lighter than crude oil, used as a base product in petrochemicals and which is one of the specialty products of Algeria.

Hassi R'Mel "The Algerian"

Some 6,000 people live in Hassi R'Mel of whom 2,200 work at SONATRACH.

There is little evidence here of an earlier French presence. Gas was discovered in 1956, but its large-scale exploitation occurred after Algeria's independence /1962/. Ultramodern, Hassi R'Mel is truly the work of Algeria. It has 180 wells, reinjection stations necessary to maintain the pressure in the field as extraction takes place, a center for warehousing and transfer from where a series of radiating pipelines originate. "Everything is all set and we shall be able to turn on the faucet whenever we are requested to do so," a technician noted at the starting point of the Algerian-Italian gas pipeline, completed in 1981. This pipeline will make possible the direct delivery of gas to Europe via Tunisia and the Strait of Messina.

It is necessary to show one's credentials when one enters the various units of this city of the future, but the atmosphere is relaxed. The Algerian Army and Air Force are not very far, at Ouargla, but no military installation insures the immediate safety of these immense resources. "We have wagered on international and domestic peace," an executive, who is familiar with the precautions taken in Europe in similar industrial zones, said.

We had lunch in the cadres' restaurant. Most of these men, shouldering significant responsibilities, are under 40 years of age. They are ardent nationalists but without blind prejudice: They recognize what they have learned from the United States, Japan, or the French Petroleum Institute, to which they refer with respect. Their day had begun at dawn, was hard, and was not yet over. The executive in charge of the production unit stood up: He would use his coffee break to say his prayers.

FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER CRITICIZES PEACE WITH ISRAEL

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 28 Feb 83 p 3

Interview with Former Foreign Minister Isma'il Fahmi by Mustafa 'Awad: "Isma'il Fahmi Reveals to AL-AHRAR Another of Al-Sadat's Initiatives besides the Visit to Jerusalem"

Text In this final instalment of his interview with AL-AHRAR, Isma'il Fahmi, the former deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, offers a revelation on an initiative which has never been announced, which al-Sadat presented to the former American president Carter. Isma'il Fahmi said that the initiative al-Sadat presented to American concerned the holding of an international summit conference to resolve the problem of peace in the Middle East.

Isma'il Fahmi said that the late President Anwar al-Sadat officially presented this initiative to the former American president Jimmy Carter before visiting Jerusalem and that Carter welcomed it but counselled that the announcement on it be postponed until the convening of the Geneva conference Carter was trying to bring about. Carter said that if the Geneva conference encountered difficulties and did not lead to anything, al-Sadat's initiative to hold a summit conference could at that point be the most suitable proposal for resolving the deep-rooted issue of peace in the Middle East.

Isma'il Fahmi added "The thinking of American officials has recently reached such a point of despair over the attainment of an Arab-Israeli peace that they are prompted to state in the American media that the best method for resolving the issue of peace in the region would be to convene an international summit conference for this purpose. The magazine NEWSWEEK published this point in its latest issue, dated 28 February. If it is true that American strategy has reached this point, and we find it turning toward the convocation of an international summit conference to resolve the Middle East crisis, that means, specifically, that Washington might at some point be compelled to return to the Egyptian recommendation that al-Sadat presented to former American president Jimmy Carter about a month before al-Sadat visited Jerusalem. I am gladdened by this development, because I consider that there is no benefit in individual initiatives."

The Arab Regimes and Camp David

Question Many people consider that what is happening on the Arab stage, in the form of fragmentation, the invasion of Lebanon and the splintering of the

Palestine Liberation Organization, is one of the results of Camp David. Do you agree with this view?

Answer What is going on on the Arab stage cannot be a result of the Camp David agreements alone. The issue in itself is broad, large and massive. The Arab stage and the Arab system or systems - politically, economically, culturally and in the media sense - and, more serious than all that, the regimes in the Arab countries, are the problem of problems on the Arab stage. All these factors interact and overlap. What is happening now on the Arab stage is the result of all this. It is a result of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, a result of the distancing or alienation of Arab peoples in Arab countries from the framework of decisionmaking, and the failure to get the people to participate in the press. Not even a small part of the press in the Arab countries is mobilized to serve the people or to interact with them; rather, it is all concerned to serve the ruler. This has all resulted in the fact that the situation in the Arab world is frightening, and one must work to create a radical change in the way in which decisions are made in Arab countries.

An Individual Decision Was the Basis for Camp David

Question Do you consider, then, that the Camp David agreements took place as a result of the methods of governance in the Arab world, or that they were founded on the basis of an "individual decision?"

Answer The Camp David agreements were founded basically on an individual, isolated decision which the late President Anwar al-Sadat took, to visit Jerusalem; he did not consult with anyone inside or outside Egypt, by his own personal admission in his interviews with the press and in the book "The Search for Identity." Camp David was a natural, inevitable result of the decision to visit Jerusalem. If we look at the second part of the Camp David agreements, bearing on the Palestinian people, we will find that it does not talk about a Palestinian state, the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people, or the complete withdrawal of Israel from Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, that is, the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. The fact that this appears in an international document signed by the late Egyptian president means that he agreed to what was stated in it; after that, as is well known, the People's Assembly could only approve what the president had approved, and, when some members of the People's Assembly were so bold as to be in opposition, the assembly was dissolved and new elections were held, which resulted in the disappearance of all the people who had voted against Camp David.

Begin Is Roaming about at Will in the Arab World

Question Why, then, did Menachem Begin, the Israeli prime minister, declare that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel?

Answer After Egypt was neutralized, it was natural that Begin and the Israeli government should "roam about" as they wished in the Arab world. Israel incorporated Jerusalem by a political decree and incorporated Golan by a political decree as well. Begin took the decision to strike at the Iraqi nuclear reactor and Israel started to replace the Israeli military administration on the West Bank

with a civilian one. Israel adopted the measure of dismissing the Palestinian mayors who had been voted in in legitimate elections, and Israel invaded Lebanon in two stages. In the latest stage, it crossed the Lebanese borders under its interpretation of the issue of security, which is unique of its kind, crossing the borders until it got to Beirut in order to establish security over an area of 45 kilometers. Then Lebanon witnessed the slaughters, the massacres and the painful incidents that recorded the comprehensive Israeli invasion of an Arab country and its capital.

Egypt Is Not Living in the Israeli Era

Question Does that mean that we are now living in the Israeli era, or the age of Israeli dominance?

Answer I reject this statement categorically. Egypt is absolutely not living in an Israeli era. Consequently, the Arab world and the Arab peoples cannot be living in an Israeli era. Instead, one can agree on a tentative basis that there have been some restrictions on Egyptian movement; these are not just restrictions imposed by the treaty or the Camp David agreements, but also numerous local and international ones, intrinsic restrictions which certain countries normally go through as well, such as the economic situation. Everything that is related to this perverse economic situation in the form of political philosophy can develop, or not develop, on behalf of peoples. At the appropriate time, Egypt, when it faces a basic problem related to its national security, will make its decision. That is, the political leadership in Egypt will take the right decision at the right time. At that point, it will become apparent to everyone that Egypt cannot be put in chains and that Egypt cannot live in the circumstances of what is called an Israeli era. Egypt is Egypt. Decisions will remain in Egypt's hands and will spread out to the Arab region, interacting and responding to the Arab world, and, to the first degree, with Egyptian national security, with all the significance this word contains.

Question What is your conception of the future of Egyptian-Israeli relations and the normalization of relations between the two countries, especially in the light of the events the Arab region is witnessing?

Answer I consider that all Egyptian-Israeli relations should be frozen in all areas and they should be restricted to official matters alone, until Israel agrees to sit down at the negotiating table to reach agreement on a way in which the Palestinians can exercise their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state, and the manner in which the boundaries of all the countries in the area can be guaranteed.

As for dealing with Israel, which is roaming at will throughout the region, the overall position of the Arab world, including Egypt, has not been articulated in form, in slogans or in other things, and none of this is proper. I believe that in order for us to be able to build bridges with the Arab world in the official sense, and in particular with the Palestinians, one cannot avoid following the method I recommend, which is to freeze all Egyptian-Israeli relations and restrict them to the official context only. If Israel once again commits aggression against Lebanon or any other Arab country, Egypt will have to declare that it will have no dealings with a country like Israel, a country that usurps

Arab rights and commits aggression against Arab countries at times of its choosing and by the means which it considers appropriate.

Unilateral Peace Initiatives

Question How can one arrive at an Arab-Israeli peace, especially since there is more than one peace plan on the stage, such as the initiative of the American president Reagan or the Fez summit initiative?

Answer It is natural, for internal or other reasons, that an official in any great power or any other country should declare "media proposals" which people call initiatives. The reasons for these proposals might be internal difficulties the ruler is facing, a change in the center of gravity or a shift in attention as regards the concerns of various peoples, election propaganda, or media propaganda also. We must observe that all the proposals that have been advanced so far have been unilateral, and thus will lead to absolutely nothing. The position of our Palestinian brothers on Reagan's initiative and what is going on in Lebanon has been very clear.

Sinai Was Not the Problem

Question Despite all the criticisms that have been made of the Camp David agreements, they did ultimately result in the return of the Egyptian territory occupied in 1967 to Egypt. What is your comment?

Answer As I have said, the visit to Jerusalem in 1977 was nothing more than an individual act, and could lead only to a separate peace with Israel. Most of the elements of this peace are ultimately to Israel's benefit. Regarding the matter of the restoration of Sinai, I can assert that Sinai was absolutely never a problem. Israel, and others besides Israel, knew that without a withdrawal from Sinai it would not be possible to attain peace in the Middle East. Sinai was absolutely not a problem.

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MINISTER OF INDUSTRY EXPLAINS CAUSES FOR FAILURE IN FOOD INDUSTRY

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic No 2523, 2 Mar 83 pp 18-19

/Interview by Suhayr al-Husayni: "The Minister of Industry Replies to the Accounting Bureau: 'Why Do You Want to Ruin the Food Industry?' Who is Responsible for the Losses?"/

/Text/ AKHIR SA'AH has opened a dossier on the public sector companies which have been ruined in the food industry. It has published the complete and actual figures for the decline of this industry which indicated that production has sunk to defective standards. Yet at the same time wholesale prices have risen at shocking rates.

On these figures AKHIR SA'AH has completed an examination of this important and significant issue. We spoke with the Minister of Industry, Mr Fu'ad Abu Zaghlal. He acknowledged that public sector companies in this field were definitely in serious decline, and that production had reached a low level. The Minister of Industry explained the measures that have been taken to confront this decline, improve production, and raise its standards /of quality/.

We also spoke with the directors of managing boards of the industry's firms and they told us their views on this matter, one which touches every household. What did the Minister of Industry say? What did the chiefs of the managing boards say? What is their explanation of the serious decline amongst the companies in the public sector? AKHIR SA'AH has covered all aspects of the matter.

To begin with we strove to meet with the top official for industry in Egypt, Mr Fu'ad Abu Zaghlal, Minister of Industry and Mineral Wealth. What did he say about the ruin of the firms in this sector?

Mr Abu Zaghlal: The ministry has already undertaken an analytical study of the causes of the serious decline of the companies to discover the reasons that have lead to this situation...and to define the responsibility and to account for the responsible official. We have actually found that there are some firms that have failed because of shortcomings of their management, like Idfina Food Company Ltd or al-Nasr Spinning and Weaving Company of Port Sa'id. High level commission have recently been drawn up to investigate the real

causes for the serious decline of these firms--and to define responsibility. Actually the managements of these companies have already been changed and the charges of violations turned over to the different legal authorities.

In spite of this there are important reasons for the serious decline, reasons which have to be considered as outside the control of the management of these ruined companies. For example, industrial firms had to carry inescapable burdens in 1981-1982 as for instance:

--an irrevocable increase in rents as a result of the inauguration of the laws of May 1981. The cost of the burden of implementing these laws has been accounted as 137.2 million pounds.

--The budget for year 1981-82 called for additional burdens as a result of a rise in the cost of the dollar and the costs of regulating the work which the banks have required of industrial firms. This later led to an increase of the cost of the dollar for 84 piasters to 105 piasters, that is a 25 percent increase. As a result of this the added expense borne by industrial firms has reached 167 million pounds.

--As a result of interruptions in the financing structures and the 'companies' poor cash flow in 1981-82 the balance of public withdrawals has attained a sum of 695.7 million pounds. Interest payments on this sum have reached 167 million pounds!

--Electrical blackouts in 1981-82 resulted in an added cost borne by industrial firms which reached 94.2 million pounds. That is, the total of the unavoidable cost burdens which industrial firms' budgets had to carry in 1981-82 reached 562.7 million pounds.

AKHIR SA'AH: Your Honor, the Industry sector in general has been accused that it is getting worse--for example let's take the soap, canning, synthetic cleaners, or glass industries. What is Your Honor's response to that?

Abu Zagħla: We are working to enhance the quality of all manufactured products. This is now the chief aim of the ministry. We have already undertaken the manufacture of new high quality varieties which are finding wide acceptance amongst the public. This improvement relies on the investments and loans needed for restructuring and for renovation works. This won't be completed overnight; it will be conducted in accordance with the loans we can get.

AKHIR SA'AH: It has appeared in the report of the Central Accounting Bureau that firms of the food industry sector have already exceeded their total allotment of expenditures of the investments projects slated for them by 1,226 percent. What are the reasons for that?

Abu Zagħla: Actually that has happened in some of the firms when investment funds did not adhere to the required implementation programs which in turn came about as a result of delays in the implementation or a prolongation of the implementation which increases the project's cost. I have already made the decisions on this topic to change the managements of these firms. And to

achieve this step we have just begun this year to follow the fourth annual investment plan so we can ensure that the implementation of yearly investments are on schedule. This will begin in the second half of the year, when the shortfalls in any project or in its ability to utilize the investment specified for it can be confirmed. In that case we will transfer these investment allocations to another more active firm which may need more capital. The Ministry of Industry and the Cabinet will follow this operation with great interest. This follow through will give a strong impetus as a consequence for a cut in the cost of the investments program operations, so that what has happened in the past won't recur. And in order to repay these investments as quickly as possible.

AKHIR SA'AH: There also appeared in the report that the level of our exports of industrial products to the world market has also declined as a result of the poor quality of products. What do you have to say to this?

Abu Zaghlal: In order for us to become an exporting country at the desired level we will have to study the world market to arrive at its needs and tastes in imports. We that we can be able to develop production in things that conform to the world market's demands and tastes. On that point we have already definitely developed our industrial products realistically up to the point where we have been able to market Qaha and Idfina food products during the past 6 months alone to the tune of 6 million pounds from the Arab countries alone.

This was particularly the result of an improvement in product quality following restructuring and renovation operations which undoubtedly have had an enormous effect on the production quality. I maintain though that production for local consumption has to come up to the same quality level as export products. This is an obligation of the industry and it is now working on implementing it. This movement is felt in this field and especially in the canning and packaging operations. We have agreed to set up a center for studies of canning and packaging in cooperation with France. This accord was signed by the French Minister of Industry during my recent visit to France last December.

AKHIR SA'AH: Why defective products? We met with Dr Adel al-Shahawi, director of the technical office for the food industry, and asked him about the quality level of the food industry and the reasons for its decline.

Dr Shahawi: If we take as example the soap industry we'll find that there are varieties available now on the local markets priced at 12 piasters per bar. They are high quality and are completely competitive with foreign soaps which sell at 50 or 60 qirsh a bar. But when we're asked to sell a bar of soap for five or six qirsh and that it should be high quality why that is unreasonable!

Likewise the manufacture of cigarettes. If we look at it we'll find that their manufacture is 100 percent machine made, that is, the quality of the cigarette or its defectiveness depends on the condition of the machines in the factories. By way of example, in the Eastern Tobacco Company we find very modern machinery of the very highest quality and others built 29 years ago...this

in spite of the fact that the average age of cigarette machines worldwide is 10 years old. For that reason we find cigarettes produced by the modern machines that conform 100 percent with specifications while the old machines produce a certain percentage of defective ones. In light of the cigarette shortage we're obliged to put the old machines into operation and the rate of defective cigarettes in some packets will continue to stay high until we can restructure and renovate the old place. As long as there is the shortage we must continue to consume a defective cigarette per box.

But when we move our attentions to the Egypt Dairy Company--and it is the firm which managed to lose 20 million pounds this year--we will find that it is inconceivable that a kilo of milk costs nine piasters and is then sold to the consumer for 10 piasters, and sometimes another kilo costs 17 piasters and is then sold to the consumer for 20 piasters. At the same time milk sells in the private sector for 60 piasters, as you know. So the company pasteurizes the milk, puts it in its container, and delivers it to the consumer or merchant then after that the criticism turns on it about the spoiled product! The same for white cheese. The Supply Ministry buys it from the company at the price of 75 piasters per kilo while the Supply Ministry itself undertakes to import cheese from abroad, subsidizes it, and sells it at a price of 125 piasters per kilo!

The justification that is often presented is that we buy milk powder at a price of 180 pounds per ton because it is subsidized. If we accounted for the expense for a kilo on the basis of its subsidy we would find that it really cost 95 piasters and not 75. And if we were to find out also that we manufacture cheese from powdered milk and whole milk, and that we get whole milk from firms of the Agriculture Ministry which has doubled the price of whole milk twice during the past 3 years and in addition the rents have doubled along with the incentives during these years also by a rate of 100 percent, then we must ask ourselves how can the company continue selling its products at the same price.

For that reason the company last year accepted a 5 million pounds subsidy from the government and lost 5 million pounds as well. It is expected that the loss for this year will be even much greater than this.

Then how under this present situation can I confront the firm's president about the quality and demand from him to improve the product? That can only mean greater losses. Improvements demand a better service, at a greater price.

And when we turn to canning we find that it took a decision in 1980 to discount the sale prices of canned goods in the internal market without any study of the expense, knowing that the price which it reduced it to was the 1978 price and not the 1980 price. The reduction for some varieties already amounted to 10, 15, and 20 percent within Qaha and Idfina alone, so the Supply Ministry issued the decision.

In spite of that the Supply Ministry has in its jurisdiction companies which produce drinks and bottled refreshments like Lappas Company--but this decision did not apply to them. So why isn't the price the same for the same product?

Despite the fact that the two should conform with the public sector? Another question: Why does the government subsidize juices, bottled sodas, and drinks even though it knows that these canned (drinks) are being taken off the market and are being recanned by the private sector where they will sell at twice the price?

The subsidy figures which the government offers to the companies is assured every year not to change. For that on the day that I increase production, the losses will mount up even more!

AKHIR SA'AH: But how can the rust which the consumer finds inside Qaha or Idfina (juice) cans be justified?

Shahawi: If I bought these cans from private sector stores you wouldn't find them rusty, but if you went to the cooperative commissary you'd definitely find them to be rusty. The reason is improper storage in the warehouses of the wholesaler firms in the public sector. You will find that a can's life is 4-5 years before it becomes unsound.

AKHIR SA'AH: Who is responsible for that?

Shahawi: The responsibility is that the government has expanded into the wholesale trade and this expansion was not accompanied by /an expansion/ of the warehouses nor the means of storing. For we have daily difficulties with the warehouses. The delivery trucks are forced to go round to all of the warehouses throughout the day until one of them will accept its good, and that's just a waste and misuse of fuel.

AKHIR SA'AH: Who is the responsible official for the warehousing operations?

Shahawi: My concern with product storage within the factories ends when the product is delivered to the storage firms belonging to the Ministry of Supply. These commodities must be stored afterwards in well-ventilated warehouses, unexposed to the sun's heat. In addition the warehouse must be well-managed; first product put in storage must be the first out. That has not been the case up to now. This is in part something that affects product quality. We've already mentioned that on a number of occasions without effect. In addition the special appropriations to the industry made from 1967 to 1973 did not cover the costs of the required restructuring and renovation programs. And from 1973 until nearly 1980 a slight increase in the appropriated capital investments have begun to occur which have been sufficient for restructuring and renovating. This has allowed a slight expansion of the production of basic commodities. But in 1980-81 capital investments have begun to be given and the product has visibly improved when those investments have been sufficient. Likewise in the coming year people will plainly and easily appreciate the improvement in the variety and quality of soap, cigarettes, synthetic cleaners and detergents. We hope that in 1983-84, next year, that we can sever the tie between soaps and synthetic cleaners and ration cards, which should to a large extent increase the required quantities.

AKHIR SA'AH: What about mineral water which public sector firms produce and which have begun to encounter great competition from firms that operate for a profit regardless of the quality of the product?

AKHIR SA'AH: With regard to mineral water, its economic problems will be solved since the government has agreed to raise the per bottle cost to 10 piasters where there will begin to be a reasonable margin for profit in production and distribution.

AKHIR SA'AH: Then we won't find rust in the bottle tops after that?

Shahawi: Definitely not. The price rise will mean an improvement in the production since there are stern directives from the minister to the firms for quality control, and a proscription to let any product onto the market that does not conform to specifications.

AKHIR SA'AH: Inside the Qaha Food Company factory I met with Mr 'Abd al-Hamid Sa'id 'Abd al-Baqi, managing director of the company. I asked the chairman of the company's board of directors of Qaha Food Company Ltd, who is also a deputy director of Idfina Company: Egypt is almost the only country which does not have any date of production or valid expiration dates printed on the can's label. Why is that?

Abu al-Baqi: There is no written elaboration on the can but when there used to be one written on it it was not done in a manner that was simple for the consumer to understand. But now we are beginning to write on the can the production date and the expiration date in a very clear fashion.

AKHIR SA'AH: What about spoiled or bad product inside the canned goods of a type that could make the consumer fear illness?

Abd al-Baqi: Qaha and Idfina's production is subject to a health inspection and they produce what conforms to normal specifications which the Standards and Measures Bureau have imposed. Quality inspection of the product is conducted at all stages. This quality control inspection goes together with the health inspector's office from the Ministry of Health. There is an inspection by the Standards Bureau and the quality control office on exports. And if there were some rusty cans then that can be blamed on poor storage or the expiration of the validity, which should be the responsibility of the merchants or distributors. These products require storage in well-ventilated warehouses and under the correct temperatures, away from heat, moisture, and sun.

AKHIR SA'AH: It has appeared in reports that Qaha and Idfina Companies' exports have declined a lot while the countries of the Far East have increased their exports to the point of drowning the world market. What is your explanation of that and are there measures to counter this competition?

Abd al-Baqi: To be sure the canning companies have begun to encounter competition in foreign markets from both the socialist countries and Far Eastern countries, since these countries have followed a policy of flooding in order to control the markets--markets which have nearly become monopolized.

In spite of that Qaha and Idfina Companies have been able to defend and consolidate their positions in these markets. Some Egyptian commodities have continued to have the lead in a few markets especially in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

AKHIR SA'AH: Inside Egypt's oils and soap factories we met with Mr Husayn Ra'fat, president of the company's board of directors, and we asked him for his explanation for the fact that we now have become like the consumer who endures badly produced soap which becomes either too watery or oily.

Ra'fat: The soap is not crumbly but it is heaped together in the warehouses of the Company for Internal Trade. These are not ventilated warehouses yet soap needs to breathe and release an aroma, but as regards bad storage it becomes oily or crumbly. For that reason we require the internal trading firms to set up warehouses with sufficient capacity outside Cairo, but near enough to it so that the manufacturing firms can insure the delivery of their product.

AKHIR SA'AH: In the reports of the Central Accounting Bureau it said that some products, like cooking oil, soap, and synthetic cooking oil are accumulated in the factories although there is a shortage of these products on the local market.

Ra'fat: We are obliged to transfer the goods to the warehouses of the Supply Ministry but there's a problem finding space in them because they're crowded and because of the near state of emergency in them and because the delivery trucks have difficulty delivering the goods to the warehouses. For this we have to speed up the construction of warehouses.

AKHIR SA'AH: What about the investment allocations for the new projects within the company whose costs have increased by up to 1227 percent?

Ra'fat: Usually a certain project's feasibility study makes total costs estimates and more than a year or so passes by from that study before the project's allocations are approved and granted, and then for the contracting for the project a period of another year passes all the while prices of equipment, and building goods, and raw materials goes up until the estimates become nearly worthless.

AKHIR SA'AH: And who is responsible for this delay in execution?

Ra'fat: The system and bureaucracy first of all. Then there's another circumstance that ruins Egyptian industry within our factories, namely the flight of the experts and specialists to other Arab countries trying to get a higher wage. While we must resort to those few left behind and we're compelled to bargain with them in spite of their being pensioned off.

AKHIR SA'AH: Where is the new trained labor force supposedly in the Ministry's vocational schools?

Ra'fat: The training's there but what is happening locally is that the demand for technical degrees causes them to head abroad after they work in the company for a year or so to acquire practical experience. This emigration is a catastrophe for national industry and the unskilled labor force is then used to operate machines and that ruins the product. In addition the food industry firms in the public sector have started to suffer from depressed prices since both oil and soap have had fixed prices since 1948, that is the cause for the severe decline that has occurred to these companies.

For instance I deliver a kilo of oil for six piasters to the Supply Ministry while the price of oil now on the world market has reached 90 piasters. Likewise a 400 gram bar of soap at 6½ piasters wholesale is sold to the consumer for seven piasters while it costs the government 25 piasters.

9587
CSO: 4504/233

REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES' PAPER ATTACKS LIBYAN MATERIALISM

London AL-ZAHAF AL-AKHDAR in English 18 Mar 83 pp 1, 4

[Text]

IT WAS believed after the Basic People's Congresses endorsed the mobilisation programme adopted by the revolutionary committees at their fifth meeting last year, that this would spur the Libyan people towards a major reduction in consumption, allowing increased spending on the arms needed to defend the Arab Nation.

It was further believed that the challenge of this mobilisation programme would lead thousands of Libyan men and women to take up employment in various productive fields. It was also anticipated that some people would even leave school or university for a short while to work as volunteers unloading goods at the ports, maintaining roads, taking part in the re-afforestation programme, cleaning the streets etc.

The hope was that the Libyans would be fired by this challenge to rise up and break the US-directed economic siege which has been imposed upon them, as well as turning the tide against backwardness and continuing the struggle against Zionism.

But what has actually happened? Instead of carrying their pickaxes and driving their tractors in the service of the collective good, Libyans have in fact increased their rate of consumption of all manner of material goods. This is an indication that all the provocations and acts of harassment and imperialist intrigue have had no effect

on them at all. The Libyans have continued to display an insatiable greed for all kinds of consumer goods, from clothes to furniture to electronic equipment, hoarding them in great quantities. This is despite the fact that enough consumer goods have been imported into the country to meet our needs for many years to come.

Welcome to the goods

So, welcome to the consumer goods, the imported food, the European cigarettes which are pouring into the Jamahiriya by air and sea. Welcome also to the canned food imported from the west, which looks more like cat food than anything else. This is what the Libyans have been waiting for as they stand in packed queues competing to get the largest share of what is flooding into the country.

With these goods, some have started up a black market which competes against the People's Markets and sells goods on the pavements in defiance of the Municipal Guard. Should we then now con-

gratulate those seen carrying a bag of semolina or a case of tinned milk to their cars, instead of having a Kalashnikov slung over their shoulder while working in one of this country's citadels of production?

How can these people tolerate a world in which their Nation stands humiliated? Why do they refuse to take the risk of martyrdom in defence of their Nation?

Six years after the declaration of the people's authority and the creation of the Jamahiriya and six months after the fifth meeting of the revolutionary committees, the Libyan Arabs continue to consume goods in a disorganised and unprogrammed way and in unimaginable quantities. They have almost depleted the herds of cattle and sheep and even capitalist exporters have been surprised by the sheer amount of goods they are able to sell us. They have furthermore learned that their belief that the Libyans were re-exporting imports from Europe was incorrect.

Tens of thousands of head of cattle and sheep continue to be imported from every continent. Some arrive alive and others as carcasses to be consumed at feasts and picnics. Those who consume in this manner are hypocrites even unto themselves, because while we hear them chant slogans saying that they have decided to 'live on

bread and water alone', they continue to import food and consumer goods costing hundreds of millions of dinars every year, which all has to be paid for in hard currency.

There seems to be no end to the purchasing missions of economic committees and the delegates of People's Markets to Europe to secure yet more imports from countries which are hostile to the Arabs and which support our Zionist and reactionary enemies. The Libyans have deserted their places of work, they have disdained voluntary labour in services necessary to the community and they have thereby contributed towards making a success of the US imperialist plan to lay a siege against the Libyan people. Their own actions thus rebound against themselves.

Incomplete freedom

Each non-productive citizen who over-consumes cannot be thought of as free or as deserving of freedom. Such citizens are unreliable when it comes to defending the land and are of no use to anyone because they do not believe in the country's great principles and values. The Libyans must therefore realise that their freedom is for the moment incomplete and will remain so as long as scores of foreign ships continue to anchor in Libyan ports to unload all kinds of unnecessary European imports.

The Libyans risk everything by not playing the role expected of them in the field of production. For what is the purpose of possessing cars and all kinds of luxuries while the Arab race faces the threat of extinction? What kind of appetite is it which allows people to gorge themselves on canned food while our own Arab brethren in Palestine are threatened with starvation and genocide?

People who boast of how many lambs they kill at a feast or family occasion and forget about everyone else may one day find themselves placed in exactly the same position as those who were massacred at Sabra and Chatila. Haven't the Libyans yet learned that lesson? Have they taken the practical steps required to produce the maximum quantity of food while consuming the minimum, allowing the acquisition of the maximum quantity of modern weapons, or do they believe they have been taking decisions for the Martians?

The Libyans must learn self-reliance; they must learn to consume the produce of their own country and to face the challenges of their enemies with a firm will, so that when they are threatened with starvation, they will be strong enough to resist any blackmail.

The Libyans need to escalate their attack against colonialism and reaction and to continue to build a free and happy society in which injustice, trade for profit and rent are things of the bourgeois past. They must resist the efforts of bourgeois and reactionary forces concealed within the ranks of the Revolution to halt revolutionary progress.

The Leader of the

Revolution has continually incited everyone to step up their productive efforts in the service of society and the revolutionary committees have formulated a programme of mobilisation intended to save this Nation from its enemies. The revolutionary committees represent the force which is committed to oppose reaction, Zionism and imperialism and to inciting the people to strengthen their Jamahiriya. It is now up to the people to learn the lessons of the past and apply them to the present.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SOLIDARITY WITH ARAB PEOPLE

Valletta JAMAHIRIYA MAIL in English 19 Mar 83 p 9

[Text] •The proceedings of the International Conference for Solidarity with the Arab people and their central cause, Palestine was concluded in the Maltese capital Valletta.

The conference, organised by the permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress, was opened by Mr Omar Hamidi, the Head of the Congress's Permanent Secretariat and Head of the International Secretariat for Solidarity with the Arab people and their central cause, Palestine.

In his speech, Mr Hamidi thanked the Maltese Government, people and the Labour Party for hosting the conference. He said the current meeting was designed for solidarity with the Lebanese people's nationalist forces against the zionist invasion of imperialist-reactionary conspiracies.

Mr Hamidi also reviewed the current situation in the Arab region and imperialist schemes against the Arab nation. He said the constant U.S. threats and provocations against the Jamahiriya are clear evidence of the U.S. danger.

He added: "Upon the escalation of the Palestinian, Egyptian and Lebanese people and the Arab nation's struggle against the Camp David process and the self-rule conspiracy, the zionist war machine, under U.S.

cover, attacked Lebanon and struck against the Palestinian Revolution and Lebanese Patriotic Movement in full view of the world..."

In another speech, the official in charge of external relations at the Maltese Labour Party affirmed the solidarity of the Maltese People and government with the Arab people and their central cause, Palestine. He said Malta has been constantly seeking to transform the Mediterranean basin into a region of peace and security, far from alliances and naval fleets.

Later, the representatives of the Lebanese Patriotic Movement, Progressive Political Forces in Europe, Angola (for Africa) and Cuba (for Latin America) delivered speeches affirming their solidarity with the Arab people against U.S. imperialism which is seeking to disunite Africa.

In another speech, the assistant secretary of the Arab People's Congress said the Lebanese and Palestinian causes are ones of principle. He said the Libyan people strongly reject all capitulationist solutions, affirming

that what has been taken by force can only be regained by force. He said the only way of regaining the occupied lands is by armed struggle.

He added that the Libyan people resolutely stand against all U.S. imperialist-reactionary conspiracies, provocations and prepared threats against Libya's shores. He also affirmed the Jamahiriya people's unlimited support for peoples struggling for peace and freedom. He called for effective, serious action to be taken in supporting the Arab nation to confront conspiracies to destroy it.

On the other hand, the head of the permanent secretariat of the Arab People's Congress and head of the international secretariat Mr Hamidi conferred with the Italian delegation representing political and cultural organisations and the Libyan-Italian friendship society. Discussions during the meeting centred on exchanging viewpoints over the best methods of bolstering

Libyan Arab-Italian relations.

Mr Hamidi also conferred with representatives of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), the African National Movements, who all expressed

their total support for Arab struggle and solidarity with the Lebanese, Palestinian and Libyan people in facing U.S. imperialist threats and provocations.

It is worth noting that a large number of delegations representing organisations from different parts of the world participated in the conference, that was held to express solidarity with the Lebanese people and their patriotic forces against the zionist invasion of their country and imperialist-reactionary designs to undermine Arab existence.

CSO: 4500/163

NEW ACQUISITIONS, FLEET INVENTORIED

Paris COLS BLEUS in French 19 Feb 83 p 9

Text The Libyan Navy has recently received a second missile-launching corvette of the Soviet "Nanushka II" type and two minesweepers of the Soviet "Natya" type. The corvette is named "Ean al-Gazala" while the minesweepers are the "Ras al-Hamman" and "Ras al-Falluga." Furthermore, half of the 10 missile-launching patrol boats of the "Combattante II" type ordered from the Mechanical Dockyards of Normandy have now reached Libya. Including these deliveries, the potential of the Libyan Navy is as follows:

--Five Soviet "Fox Trot" type submarines: "Al-Badr," "Al-Fatch," "Al-Ahdad," "Matrega," and "Mitraka."

--Two 750-ton "Nanushka II" type missile-launching corvettes: "Ain Mura" and "Ean al-Gazala."

--Four 680-ton corvettes of the "Assad" (formerly "Wadi") type.

--One 500-ton corvette: "Tobruk."

--Five "Combattante II" type missile-launching patrol boats: "Beir Grassa," "Beir Gzir," "Beir Gtifa," "Beir Glulud," and "Beir Ktitat."

--Twelve Soviet "Osa II" type missile-launching patrol boats.

--Thirteen other patrol boats.

--Four Soviet "Natya" type minesweepers.

--Two "Ibn Ouf" type LST's landing ship tank delivered by La Seyne Dockyards in 1977-78.

--Three Soviet "Polnoanyi" type LSM's landing ship medium.

--One base building to house motor torpedo boats and minesweepers.

Two other "Nanushka II" type corvettes are expected and, perhaps, additional "Natya" type minesweepers from the Soviet Union and, naturally, the remaining patrol boats ordered from the Mechanical Dockyards of Normandy.

The corvettes of the "Wadi" type have had their designations changed: They are now called "Assad al-Tadjiier" (formerly "Wadi M'Rach"), "Assad al-Thoughour" (formerly "Madi Majer," "Assad al-Khali" (formerly "Wadi Merseat"), and "Assad al-Hudud" (formerly "Wadi Magrawa").

These vessels now constitute what is known as the "Assad" type.

2662
CSO: 4519/163

MINISTER'S REPORT ON AGRICULTURE

Khartoum SUNA in English No 4432, 17 Mar 83 pp 7-9

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Mar (SUNA)--Chaired by House Speaker 'Izz-al-din al-Sayyid, the People's Assembly yesterday unanimously passed a bill for 1983 on the Assembly's privileges and immunity. The bill was presented at the third reading stage.

On the other hand, the Assembly heard a statement by Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Dr 'Uthman Hakim, on the policy of his Ministry.

In his statement Dr. Hakim stressed that the soundness of Sudan's national economy depended on the soundness of the agricultural sector.

Speaking about the irrigated sector the Minister said his Ministry undertook a comprehensive study of this sector as early as 1980. He said the rehabilitation of New Halfa project and al-Jazirah, Blue Nile, al-Rahad and White Nile schemes were made against easy term loans of \$76 million offered by the World Bank and the European Economic Community (EEC).

Referring to the problem of decline and deterioration of production in this sector Dr. Hakim spoke of his Ministry's serious investigation into this issue since 1975. He announced that the investigations made revealed that the relations of production then prevailing were the cause of the decline of production and thus new relations of production were announced by the President in 1981. He explained the theme of the new relations of production which, he said, gave farmers effective incentives.

Doctor Hakim said his ministry would follow during the coming years a policy that would focus on pump-irrigated projects and rain-fed mechanized agriculture.

On the policies of his Ministry of Irrigation Dr. Hakim said his Ministry has concluded soil survey studies on Satit Dam. He added that the economic and technical feasibility study on the project was finalized within the framework of the French protocol.

Speaking about the conventional agriculture sector Dr. Hakim said his ministry was giving this sector full care because it has a palpable contribution to national production. He said this sector's contribution to production during 1981/82 was: 26 percent of the overall production of sorghum, 100 percent of the total production of millet, 66 percent of the overall production of groundnut, and 71 percent of the total production of sesame.

Doctor Hakim spoke of the Western Savannah Development Project and said the World Bank has provided \$38.2 million while the Saudi Development Fund has put in \$25.5 million in addition to \$2.7 million raised from local resources. He also referred to the Blue Nile Rural Development Project which was being implemented by the help of USAID at the cost of \$16 million.

The House Speaker transferred the Minister's statement to the Agricultural Production and Irrigation Committee the Economy, Plan, Supply and Industry Committee.

CSO: 4500/160

BRIEFS

AL-QADARIF WATER SHORTAGE--Kassala, 17 Mar (SUNA)--The Eastern Region People's Assembly yesterday heard a report from the Regional Government on water shortage at al-Qadarif, presented by the Deputy Governor. The Assembly took note of the Regional Government's efforts to provide water for the town and urged the government to continue with and double efforts for this purpose. In a statement it issued here the Regional Government attributed water shortage to the low level of River 'Atbarah at Shuwak water station. The government said it was supplying the town from other areas and that it has started maintenance of Abu al-Naja station wells. The statement urged the citizens to be patient and to guard against subversive elements. [Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English No 4432, 17 Mar 83 p 5]

REFUGEE SITUATION SURVEYED--Kassala, 17 Mar (SUNA)--The Deputy U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. William R. Smyser arrived here yesterday and conferred with Eastern Region's Deputy Governor Sulayman 'Uthman Faqiri and Regional Ministers of Agriculture and Housing. The meeting discussed refugee requirements in the spheres of education, health and agriculture. The meeting also touched on water scarcity in al-Qadarif area where 60,000 refugees live. Commissioner of Refugees 'Abd al-Majid al-Ahmadi explained that an influx of refugees is expected and it was important to make suitable preparations to host them. The delegation will pay a visit to Wad Sherifai, Khash al-Qirbah, al-Shuwak and al-Qadarif refugee camps. [Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English No 4432, 17 Mar 83 p 6]

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLAINTS--The Regional People's Assembly yesterday heard a complaint from Member Sabit Wani about the East Equatoria Farmers Seat, low agricultural and commercial production in the Region and the inefficiency of the Unity and the agricultural banks' services in the Region. The Regional Finance and Agriculture Ministers are expected to report to the House on the matter later. [Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English No 4432, 17 Mar 83 p 11]

ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT COMPANY--Khartoum, 18 Mar (SUNA)--Subscription for share holding to the Islamic Development Company is due to be announced mid next April. The founders of the company will hold a meeting here on 15 April under the chairmanship of Prince Muhammad al Faysal, the head of the Muslim businessmen group that visited the Sudan last November. The group had last November announced the establishment of the Islamic Development Company at a billion dollars capital. The one-hundred founders of the company include a number of Sudanese businessmen in addition to the members of the Muslim Businessmen group. April's meeting in Khartoum will also nominate the board and sign the basic statute of the company. [Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English No 4433, 18 Mar 83 p 2]

MEMBER OF SOCIALIST GROUPING OFFERS OPINIONS ON RECENT ARRESTS

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Mar 83 p 5

Interview with Socialist Grouping Member Amor Mestiri: "The Issue Is Not One of Legality; Rather, It Is The Intention To Deprive the Politically Aware of Their Right to Pursue Legitimate Activity"

Text Last week seven people who had been detained in the Socialist Grouping case were released. AL-RA'Y, out of its concern to enlighten public opinion, sought to get in touch with one member of this group, to ask him some questions that have been bruited about in political circles regarding the circumstances surrounding this case.

We managed to hold the following interview with Mr Amor Mestiri:

Question What charge was leveled against you in this case?

Answer The charge of "participating in the maintenance of a group which had not been granted a permit."

Question What charges were directed against your comrades?

Answer There was a single charge in this case, and that was the one mentioned above.

Question So you not believe that there actually are logical legal and material grounds for leveling these charges against your group?

Answer From the standpoint of the facts, there are no legal grounds for this charge. All the situation consists of is that some of the accused met and held discussions on the conditions of the left in Tunisia, and these discussions ended with the conclusion that it was necessary to establish a socialist grouping. As a consequence, there are no organizations that exist of tremendous structures, leaders, finances, or even regular meetings. In a word, there is no political entity by the name of the grouping.

Question Why do you say "some" of the accused?

Answer One of the strange anomalies in this case is that a number of the accused did not take part in these meetings in any way whatever.

Question However, your meetings took place secretly, it seems.

Answer The meetings were private but they were not secret. There is an obvious difference between the two, and this is something the law permits. As regards societies, Law Seven of November 1959 stipulates that it is necessary to provide to the Ministry of the Interior with a charter. It is clear that that requires preparation, preparatory activities and consultation; nothing in the law stipulates that it is necessary to give notice regarding these preparatory activities.

Although we contest the constitutionality of the Law on Societies, the draft of a charter has been prepared that stipulates, in its first chapter, that "the grouping will be subject to the 1959 law."

Question If the matter lacks any legal foundations, as you say, how do you explain your arrest then?

Answer The matter is not one of legality, in reality; rather, it is cloaked in a dangerous political character which is represented by an insistence on depriving a particular group of politically aware people of their right to open political activity. This is a form of behavior that conflicts with the declarations the regime is making about approving of pluralism and pursuing a policy of "liberalization."

The serious side to this is that this sort of program threatens to eliminate the freedom of open political activity that a number of other political movements have managed to impose to some degree; this freedom ought to have evolved from the level of actual traditions to the level of rights consecrated in law.

We insist on exercising our right of organization and open political activity, and we will continue our struggle to acquire this right, like other political organizations, in spite of the obstacles and vexations.

Question What need is there today for another political organization? Don't you believe that that will increase the complexity of conditions on the political stage and the fragmentation of opposition forces?

Answer Before answering that question, I would like to point to an important issue, which is the fact that here I am expressing only my personal opinions, although I share the views of my comrades on many issues. The grouping's program is still a draft that is in the process of crystallizing, and the discussion of it was not exhausted, as is well known, because of the arrests.

Let me now come to the answer, and state that everyone knows that the socialist left was in the forefront in the struggle for respect for freedoms and the establishment of democracy. In the past it was not content just to ask — it also exercised its right of self-expression and organization in accordance with the spirit of the constitution and, in the darkest times, it paid an exorbitant price (trials, imprisonments, heavy sentences), in order to impose a recognition of pluralism, the right of people in the opposition to exercise democratic freedoms, and their right to take part in public life. Today it is anxious to reap the fruit of its struggles and occupy the position it deserves on the politically aware patriotic elements.

Since 1963 the socialist left has been characterized by its own political and intellectual proposals and alternatives, and it is continuing along the road to crystallizing an integrated conception of the desired socialist society.

Question However, your political plan differs in many aspects from the leftist experiments of the past.

Answer Indeed, intellectual and political disputes within the left for a long time continued to be reflected in sterile arguments and bickering which caused numerous rifts and internecine struggles, obstructing the crystallization of the left's political plan and delaying the formulation of an integrated socialist political alternative. Therefore, it is necessary to get all the parties that are concerned with this plan to participate in the preparation of its program and determine its positions on the essential issues. We are in fact anxious not to subject any of these parties whatever to a fait accompli that will impose prefabricated options on it.

Question How did you start to feel that it was necessary to create an independent leftwing organization?

Answer This feeling was strengthened and came to the surface in the wake of the latest parliamentary elections, because the leftist movement remained in a negative position and was not able to convey its options, positions and demands to the masses as the other forces of the opposition had. As a result of the mass receptivity toward the meetings the opposition movements organized, we acquired a deep-rooted conviction that it was necessary to make a radical review of the experiences of the past in order to rectify and transcend the crisis in which the left had become embroiled. We thought up the plan of reviving a grouping of the socialist left.

Question What makes you sure that the conditions for transcending the negative features of the past exist?

Answer We embarked on this plan realizing most profoundly the difficulty of the task and the delicate nature of the gamble, which is that we are aspiring to combine conflicting views, schools of thought and conceptions which nonetheless are in agreement on a number of options - the construction of true socialist society and the fact that this construction can take place only in a context of democracy, pluralism and respect for individual and public freedoms.

Question What is the best of the models you emulate in the attainment of this socialist society?

Answer It is no secret to anyone that the world socialist movement is suffering from a deep, firmly-rooted crisis which has created a feeling of bitterness in the spirits of most socialists. This crisis has helped uproot illusions about all the experiments of international "socialism" from people's minds. That has prompted us to put all previous models to the side and attempt to seek a distinctive road toward socialism which will proceed from the particular features of our own situation. That does not mean that we do not benefit from other experiments, whether in the negative or positive senses.

There is no doubt that embracing a "socialist model" obstructs intellectual innovation, conceals one's own particular features and premises of reality, and turns the intellectual struggle into a mere conflict among models that are divorced from and elevated above reality.

Question What is your final statement on this issue?

Answer There is no doubt that it is a danger signal. It could be the beginning of a regression of the faltering partial experiment in pluralism. In this guise, it should be considered a threat to all opposition movements that have not obtained legal permits. Therefore it is necessary that the government prove that it is adhering to what it declared in its political programs by taking a decision that will protect this cause, as far as both the opposition movements and all democrats go. We hope that people's efforts will be joined together in common action on behalf of the imposition of respect for people's freedoms and the attainment of common democratic demands.

11887
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EDITORIALIST SETS OUT GOALS, ACTIONS OF ISLAMIC PUBLICATION

Tunis 21/15 in Arabic No 2, Jan 83 p 10

Article by Ahmed Kerfa: "What Are Your Expectations of This Magazine: Let Us Be Faithful to Our Trust"

Text It is often said that the birth of a new publication is tantamount to a new step along the road to intellectual and social liberation. This statement is not always correct, because it is based on an absolute judgment. There have been relatively many new publications in our country, but along with many people I wonder if these publications, with a few exceptions, have liberated people's spirits and minds, or whether they have liberated people's appetites, and consequently represent an element in the regression of the society, because they rule out man's innate lofty conduct and turn him away from it toward trivial pursuits which are a preoccupation with satisfaction with things in which one ought not find satisfaction, a flight from independent thinking, and a feeling of happiness that is derived from narcotics.

The criterion of a press pluralism which reflects an intellectual pluralism is not the number of titles that are issued; the permeation of society by this type of pluralism cannot as a consequence be measured by the number of readers of every publication, unless one takes their contents into account. If pluralism in the press in our country has become a tangible reality, and portrays our intellectual, social and political life in the manner I have mentioned, then it is still frivolous and has not filled the great void whose existence we are sensing.

The magazine 21/15, which is emerging into the light of day today after a long period of gestation, will without a doubt fill part of this void, because it will be one of the richest elements in the social religious intellectual debate, a debate which arises from free thought that is supported by notions of lofty humane Islamic values and is aimed at deeply implanting our genuine Arab Islamic nature, at strengthening our link with our future, and at deepening our consciousness of ourselves, the powers of our future history, and the center of gravity of our future in the course of human civilization.

As is well known, social time assumes various forms. How many short periods of time have been like centuries, and how many centuries are equal to nothing in the context of history, as if the planet had ceased revolving. While I take an attitude of wariness in describing the historic degree of our present his-

torical era in absolute terms, I can nonetheless claim that it is in any event a period which is at least preparing for a subsequent period which will be heavily burdened in the historical sense. While time is what brings history about, it is man that creates history. In creating history, that is, in moulding it in the manner in which it will ultimately be consummated, there is no inevitable certainty that determines this final pattern: social inevitability is only relative, and its relative nature arises from its dialectical interaction with what can be considered the most sublime aspect of man, which is human freedom.

If we are aware of the fact that human history is moulded by this interaction between inevitability and freedom, we will be better aware of the value of our work and its effect on the course of life and the course of history - that is, we will be better aware of the need to be wary of succumbing to errors that can cause history to take a turn that is different from the one we want it to take. Perhaps this represents the most magnificent of positions and one of the most majestic and grave moments of freedom, because it is a moment of responsibility. (Can't we believe that this duality of freedom and responsibility is what God had in mind in the holy verse "We presented the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, and I am showing that man should bear it, and has borne it?")

It is in this context that I am setting out the role of this magazine, which is a great role.

The Islamic phenomenon has now assumed new dimensions, which have taken all the politicians and scholars who make predictions about the future of human destiny by surprise. It is the source of everyone's thinking, and the source of perplexity in some individuals and perseverance in others. That proves its depth, which comes from the depth of the perplexity of Islamic society, which has remained for many long centuries on the sidelines of history and which, when it became conscious of its situation and realized its current inability to determine its own destiny and the extent to which it had become an appendage of Western civilization, turned toward religion as one turns to a mirror so that his own self may become apparent. Naturally the first thing that one notices is one's heritage.

Our future will be prosperous, or not prosperous, to the extent that we are wise in dealing with our heritage. If it is evident that we are grasping our heritage, then it will be evident that we are putting it in a living, dialectical process with the values of the era, which may be summarized by such words as progressivism, democracy, socialism and so forth. Otherwise, this phenomenon may lead to further regression, that is, to a backward movement in history.

That is this magazine's destiny, as I envision it. It indeed has a political dimension which is one of the deepest and noblest senses of politics, because it is flowing into the course of history and considers that man should attain further freedom and that he should be uplifted to the loftiest degrees of sense of responsibility, a responsibility which bears the trust that God has presented. That is, ultimately, the responsibility that man should possess the fully developed attributes of humanity in the modern, evolved sense of the word.

May God give my brother and friend Hamida El Neifar and his colleagues success in their earnest efforts to turn this magazine into a magazine for thought, knowledge and constructive dialogue, so that it may be Moslem Arab Tunisia's contribution to the process of "the search for identity" that has surged over all Islamic societies. It will not be difficult for Tunisian thought to acquire a major role in clarifying these grave issues that the course of mankind may depend on, now that the bankruptcy of the various systems that are founded on materialism has started to become apparent. Thus, this creative Tunisian thinking will renew its compact with the process of thought and civilization that have accompanied it since the earliest times. God is the lord of success.

11887
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INTERVIEW WITH MOHAMED FADEL ISMAIL

Paris REVOLUTION in French 18 Mar 83 pp 23, 24

[Interview with Mohamed Fadel Ismail, POLISARIO representative in France, by Dominique Vidal: "Sahara: After the Chadli-Hassan Meeting"; date and place not specified]

[Text] After the summit meeting between the Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid and King Hassan II of Morocco, how does the POLISARIO Front plan to continue its struggle? Mohamed Fadel Ismail, its representative in France, answers.

[Question] The Chadli-Hassan meeting has given rise to many comments and at least as many speculations. What are the comments of the POLISARIO Front?

[Answer] Our Department of Foreign Relations has made a very official statement: we welcomed the Algerian initiative of a meeting with the King of Morocco. Algeria is the leading supporter of the POLISARIO Front; it is a country, therefore, which enjoys the full confidence of our people, of our front and of the government of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic.

Besides, this is not the first time that Algeria takes such an initiative. I am referring to the Mauritanian-Moroccan meeting that was organized by Algeria in 1969, after Rabat had been claiming back Mauritania for 10 years. Or to the role played by Algeria in the signature of a peace agreement between the Mauritanian government and the POLISARIO Front, in 1979.

This initiative is all the more positive as Algeria's position is clear: it is not trying to substitute itself to the Saharan government; all it wants is to reconcile the views of that government and those of the Moroccan government, to arrive at a peaceful solution based on the Saharan people's right to independence. In other words, that meeting does not represent an Algerian-Moroccan mediation, but a step toward direct negotiations between the Moroccan and Saharan governments. In our opinion, such negotiations are the best way to achieve peace and absolute respect of the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] sovereignty and territorial integrity by Morocco.

[Question] At the time of the National Palestinian Council--i.e. before the Algerian-Moroccan summit--I was impressed by the analysis presented to be by Ould Salek, the POLISARIO official in charge of foreign relations. To sum-

marize his views, the position of the Moroccan regime had become so delicate, with respect both to domestic policies and to the POLISARIO, militarily as well as diplomatically speaking, that it had to make a move. If only to gain time.

[Answer] The Moroccan monarchy's position can be summarized in two words: isolation and asphyxiation. Morocco is an occupying power that is becoming occupied: U.S. bases, missions of U.S. technical and political experts and advisers. The country is on the brink of bankruptcy. And, above all, the conflict between the army and the palace has been reopened, as could be seen from Dlimi's latest attempt, for which he was murdered...

[Question] ... Yet, public opinion and the parties that represent it do not seem to be "opting out," at least not on the Saharan question?

[Answer] Hassan's sole concern is to save his throne. This was the reason for his aggression against Sahara in 1975, when he found himself in a similar crisis situation: a crisis that was both economic and political, with the army making two attempts at seizing power. He had to send the army away: he sent it to Western Sahara. Today, however, keeping it over there is what threatens the throne. So, to gain time, the king is using now the army against the parties, and now the parties against the army. He is also doing the same on an international scale with France and the United States.

[Question] In the Sahara itself, in the field, some say things are getting quieter...

[Answer] ... Not so. Not one day goes by without one or several Moroccan positions being bombarded by the Saharan People's Liberation Army. If we were to give the lie to those who try to make us forget the war that is going on in our country, I could mention the offensive launched on 27 February--the date of the seventh anniversary of the SDAR--in the Smara area.

Our slogan remains: "All our homeland or martyrdom!" Hassan must understand that we shall not stop our struggle before the complete withdrawal of Morocco and its forces.

[Question] And in the diplomatic field? After the two failed OAU summits in Tripoli, has the idea of a referendum made any progress?

[Answer] Our international recognition is greater than it has ever been. Fifty-four Asiatic, Latin American and African countries have recognized the SDAR. Just in Africa, they are over 30 so that, on 22 February 1982, the SDAR was received as a full-fledged OAU member, in the same way as Morocco, whether Morocco likes it or not.

To allow the Tripoli summit to take place, we had agreed that the SDAR would not be represented, since this was the reason advanced by some to thwart the summit. But the U.S.-Moroccan plan went on: the Chadian question was used as another pretext. And if it had been solved, we are sure another pretext would have been found.

There remains the essential: the SDAR has been admitted, and that is irreversible; it has been recognized by 30 member countries, and the Committee of Twelve appointed by Tripoli-2 has decided to organize a summit without preliminaries, and to invite the SDAR...

[Question] ... but what about the planned referendum?

[Answer] The SDAR government and the POLISARIO Front have always struggled to preserve the Saharan people's right to choose its fate in full sovereignty. This is why we have always been in favor of true self-determination. We agree to a referendum, but not without a complete withdrawal of the Moroccan army and administration...

[Question] ... Do you agree to international control?...

[Answer] ... Of course. There could be an international force to preserve order while an international UN or OAU administration would organize the referendum. Our views on this have been known for a long time. They are also in agreement with the proposals made by Morocco at the United Nations in 1974...

[Question] ... To progress toward this solution, what do you expect from the French government?

[Answer] We deplore the French government's attitude. When it came into office, we hoped that ties between it and the POLISARIO Front would develop. We are disappointed. On this question, the French government does not go any further than France did under Valery Giscard d'Estaing.

What do we expect from the French government? As long as it maintains military experts in Morocco, as long as it delivers weapons which are used against a nation to which--according to the President of the Republic--France recognizes the "right to self-determination," as long as it does not reconsider its ties with the POLISARIO Front, we shall, unfortunately!, have nothing to expect from the French government.

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STATUS OF SEPHARDI-ASHKENAZI TENSIONS ASSESSED

Tel Aviv KOTERET RASHIT in Hebrew No 10, 2 Feb 83 pp 12-14

[Article by Arye Dayan: "The Ashkenazim: A Disappearing World"]

[Text] "I am Ashkenazi, a Jerusalem native, eighth generation in the country. My family came from Russia eight generations ago. I learned Yiddish at home from my grandmother but all the neighborhood kids in those years learned Yiddish from the Yiddish-speaking religious neighbors and Arabic from the Arab neighbors. I am not ashamed, God forbid, of my Ashkenazi origin because that would be as if I was ashamed of being Jewish. But the truth is that I prefer to leave the matter of my origin cloudy. I know that my audience is aware that I am from the Oriental community. I don't want to disappoint them."

These are the words of actor and pantomimist Shaike Ofir, who was born as Shaike Goldstein; such words are typical of the situation of more and more Ashkenazis in the Israeli society. During the past decade the number of Ashkenazis who coulded their origins increased in a meaningful way. It stems, among other reasons, from the fact that since the end of the 1960's a mixed origin middle class has developed in the country; 50 percent of all marriages in this class are between persons of different community origins. But there is also an additional reason: In secular Israel at the beginning years of the 1980's there was no Ashkenazi culture, no Ashkenazi "entertainment", with the exception of the Philharmonic orchestra, which also has members from the Oriental community. "I don't know of even one cultural phenomenon in Israel which I can call Ashkenazi," says Shaike Ofir.

The question of the existence or nonexistence of Ashkenazi culture in Israel stems from another more basic question: Is it at all possible to speak of the existence of Ashkenazi identity in Israel? Do the Oriental Jews in Israel have any cultural common denominator? Does an Ashkenazi way of life exist outside the religious communities? "The question of the existence or nonexistence of an Ashkenazi identity in Israeli society is one of its basic dilemmas," says Professor Moshe Lisk, a lecturer and researcher in Sociology Department of the Hebrew University. "I maintain that there is no Ashkenazi culture in the secular community in Israel. Only the religious Jews from the Eastern cultures and the ultra-orthodox

Neturai Karta preserved a life style which is similar in one way or another to the life styles of the majority of Ashkenazi Jews in their countries of origin in Eastern or Central Europe."

Professor Yochanan Peres, the author of the book, "Community Relations in Israel," maintains that it is possible to define identity in positive terms and in negative terms. "In the case of the Ashkenazis in Israel there is no problem in defining their Ashkenazi identity in negative terms. Members of the Oriental community do it incessantly: whoever is not Oriental is defined as an Ashkenazi."

Along with it Peres thinks that among certain segments of the Ashkenazi public--which constitute a small minority--there are two perceptions which could constitute a positive Ashkenazi identity. "Among a part of the veteran generation, and especially among the educated, there is a deep attachment to cultural qualities typical of Eastern Europe. I mean, for example, the special attitude toward Russian literature, the worship of classical music, or the attitude toward European history as a general reference concept. All of this is the legacy of a minority of the Ashkenazi public, but it has qualitative importance. The second perception is the religious perception, which is solely the legacy of the religious public."

The Ashkenazi religiosity is expressed also, according to Yochanan Peres, in a peculiarly Israeli phenomenon such as the Gush Emunim. "The fact that most of the members of Gush Emunim are Ashkenazis is not accidental. Everything concerning them is built on foundations much closer to Ashkenazi religiosity than to Oriental religiosity; the Hasidic melodies, the Rabbi's authority over the Hassidim in his court, the study of Torah as an occupation--all these are foreign to a certain extent to Oriental Jewry."

These are phenomena and qualities which are peculiar to a small segment of the Ashkenazi population in Israel. The absence of gradual disappearance of the secular Ashkenazi identity expresses itself concretely in what is referred to as the Israeli "wedding culture" by which the Israeli middle class adopted more or less uniform patterns to mark joyful occasions.

The wedding is not an Ashkenazi or Oriental phenomenon but, indubitably, an Israeli phenomenon.

Yosef Goldstein is the owner of Hadar, a large wedding hall in the center of Givatayim. "There is almost no difference between an Ashkenazi and Oriental wedding," he says. "The difference is between a wedding of a religious couple and a secular couple." Goldstein states that the number of weddings in his hall is equally divided between Ashkenazis and Orientals. "The character of the wedding is determined nowadays by the bride and the groom and not by the parents. Young couples, of all communities, like the same songs and the same dances. The menu is also the same, with minor differences: sometimes there is an Ashkenazi couple that prefers gefilte fish and sometimes an Oriental couple that wants baked fish."

In the halls in Masger Street in Tel Aviv, the street of the middle class weddings, it is difficult to distinguish between an Ashkenazi and an Oriental wedding. Avi Aluf, the manager of Shoshanim Hall can point out only small differences between an Ashkenazi and Oriental wedding. "The orchestra in an Oriental wedding usually plays a little more Greek music while the orchestra in an Ashkenazi wedding plays tangos or walses. In the menu there are also small differences: If the Oriental orders burkas the Ashkenazi usually orders blintzes. This is about the extent of the difference."

Last year Avi Aluf conducted a statistical survey on the community origin of the couples who married in his hall: 37 percent of them were Ashkenazis, 50 percent of them were from the Oriental community and the remaining 13 percent were mixed couples. "Usually the mixed weddings are more like the Oriental weddings than like the Ashkenazi weddings," says Aluf.

The Ashkenazi identity which has been blurred in the wedding halls has also been blurred on the Israeli establishment stage. The Gashash Hachiever group--one of the most authentic expressions of the new Israeli culture--is a clear example of this blurring. The audience which comes to a performance of the Gashashim lacks a defined community identity; the humor of the group has many communal characteristics--but avoids identifying with a particular community. This phenomenon is not as prominent in the theater but here too the audience has become more and more diversified from a communal standpoint. "The Evolution of a New Theatre Audience in Israel" is the name of research conducted recently in the drama department of Tel Aviv University. The three researchers, Giora Rahav, Shoshana Weitz, and Gita Zeltser, checked and found that natives of Asian and African countries, or Israeli natives whose parents came from Asia and Africa, constitute 27 percent of the general theater audience in Tel Aviv and 65 percent of the general audience in the development towns. These rates are still much lower than the percentage of the Orientals in the general population but they are especially remarkable due to the fact--the researchers note--that "they were not exposed to the theater in their countries of origin."

The multi-communal audience does not skip Oriental cultural happenings which began to flourish in recent years. The Habreira Hativiet group is often represented as an expression of a renaissance of Oriental culture in Israel. Shlomo Bar, the living spirit and founder of the group, said that his singing constitutes a protest against the "suppression of the Oriental culture" and against the dominance of the Ashkenazi culture. But, also, Habreira Hativiet itself is first and foremost an Israeli cultural phenomenon: in the group's melodies one can recognize a blend of Oriental music with Eastern European Hasidic motifs. The group is diversified from the standpoint of its members' origins. The moving protest songs of Habreira Hativiet were written by the Ashkenazi, Yoshua Sobol.

At the beginning of the 1980's, a type of Ashkenazi-Oriental culture was created in Israel. To a certain extent it is characterized by a certain shallowness stemming, among other reasons, from it being cut off from any deep cultural roots. The Ashkoriental--the new Israeli--reads YEDIO'T AHARONOT but wants people to think he reads HA'ARETZ.

The poet Erez Biton is considered by many to be one of the flagbearers of the Oriental culture that has sprung up in the nation during the past decade. He tends to identify the seculra Ashkenazi culture in Israel mainly with Western values--first and foremost the American--which took hold in Israeli society from the beginning. "In this sense I would say that it is not the Oriental community and Ashkenazi community which stand opposed to one another, since one speaks here of the contrast between modern western American values like, for instance, achievement, which takes the place of humaneness, on the one hand and traditional Jewish values on the other.

"It is interesting that within the part of my family that emigrated directly to France, these values were preserved, even though many modern French values were also absorbed," says Biton. In this matter the Oriental Jews are very close to the "most Ashkenazi" Jews--the very Orthodox Jews. "Oriental culture and art in Israel," says Biton, "began to flourish as a result of a change that took place within the Ashkenazis after the Yom Kippur War. Until then they saw the Arab and Arab culture as something backward, which could not match itself against Israeli values. The Oriental community also accepted this assumption and suppressed the Oriental foundations in their culture. As a result of the war, the image of the Arab changed in the eyes of the Ashkenazis. This caused an internal change with the Orientals and brought about the beginning of the flourishing of the Oriental culture in Israel."

The emptying of Ashkenazi identity from most of its substance can come to a symbolic expression, in the words of Danny Neuman, the only player on the Jerusalem Betar soccer team whose origin is not Oriental. "I never thought about the question what it is to be Ashkenazi. I feel Ashkenazi because this is what I was born and I am not ashamed of it. I, for example, would never Hebraicize my name from Neuman to Noy. I think that whoever Hebraicizes his name expresses a feeling of inferiority." Danny Neuman says that he personally knows 80 percent of his team's fans and he can testify that at least 40 percent of them are Ashkenazis. In the past he played for Maccabi Tel Aviv. "I do not know if it was related to the fact that there were more Ashkenazi players - Maccabi Tel Aviv than on Jerusalem Betar, but the atmosphere there was more "intellectual." It was expressed after practice, for example, when every player was in a rush to leave the field. In Betar such a thing does not exist. After practice we always sit together, drinking something and talking."

The disappearance of the Ashkenazi identity is expressed in all areas of life, with the exception of religious life: This is the result of an historic process which stems from the founders of the ideology, which shaped the image of the Zionist movement and the Jewish settlement in

in Israel already in the 1920's and 1930's. Socialist Zionism and to a certain extent also the Revisionist Zionists wanted to create in Israel a new Jew. For that purpose it was necessary to sever all the attachments that bound the Jews of Israel to their place of origin in Europe. This came to be expressed in the school curriculum and in the cultural programs that Zionist organizations conducted. The youth movement was a clear product of this policy. "If Zionism had a cultural policy," says Professor Lisk, "it was based on liquidating the Ashkenazi culture. The policy was not only directed against the Orientals," says Lisk. "There was, for example, a great fear of the reaction of the Holocaust survivors to this policy. There was a great struggle over the question of how to turn them into Israelis."

There undoubtedly was particularly shown toward the newcomers from Europe in comparison with those from the Orient. However, the purpose was the same: To blend all the newcomers into one society, one culture that would be served from the country of origin.

The melting pot policy which was received well by the Ashkenazi native-born Israeli seemed to the Orientals as a policy of cultural suppression. Dr. Sami Samucha, a lecturer in the department of Sociology at Haifa University says: "The Oriental Jews were not interested in the fact that the Ashkenazis were cut off from their roots."

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ISRAEL

AIR FORCE TO INCREASE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 15 Feb 83 pp 1, 15

[Article by Rafael Mann: "The Air Force Will Increase Its Strength by 25 Percent; Will Operate F-18 and the Lavie"]

[Text] Israel is planning to increase its air power from 19 fighter squadrons at nine bases to 24 fighter squadrons at 10 bases by the mid-1990's.

Along with the increase in the number of fighter planes, the Israeli Air Force is planning to undertake a modernization process under which Kfir, Skyhawk, and Phantom planes will be replaced by modern aircraft of the Lavie, F-15E, F-16E and F-18L models--these details were published yesterday in AVIATION WEEK.

The weekly magazine reports that according to estimates of American officials the 584 jet fighter planes which the air force has is considered a force that could contest any Arab threat. But, according to Israel, this force will not be sufficient in the 90's since 473 out of the 584 will become three decades old in the 90's.

The Israeli air force now possesses three squadrons of F-16's, two squadrons of F-15's, three squadrons of Kfir fighter-interceptors, and also one Kfir squadron and four Phantom fighter-bomber squadrons. The air force now also has four Skyhawk squadrons and one squadron of Kfir fighter-bombers.

The number of planes in the air force will reach its peak, reports the weekly magazine, in 1986, when it will number 703 fighter planes. Afterwards there will be a decrease in the number of planes until 1989, when the Lavie will begin to go into operations. Even with the acquisition of the Lavie the decrease in the number of planes will continue until it will reach 600.

AVIATION WEEK gave the following details about the number of planes in the various categories: F-15--Israel has 39 of these planes today, the number will increase to 49 in 1986; F-16--there are today 72 planes and their number will increase to 144 in 1986; F-4 Phantom--there are today 133 planes and their number will decrease to 100 in 1991; Kfir--there are now 163 planes, there will be 200 of them in 1986 and their number will decrease to 100 in 1995.

Sixty of the Skyhawk planes are in storage and they are up for sale. The number of planes of this type in use [in Israel] will decrease in the 80's, irrespective of whether they will be sold or not. In 1995 the air force will only have one squadron of Skyhawks which will mainly be used for operational instruction training.

The production of the Kfir will continue at the rate of 18 planes per year until the end of production in 1986. After that date Israel will make an effort to sell the plane to foreign countries while at the same time it will try to phase them out from the Israeli Air Force.

AVIATION WEEK reports that the key to Israel's success in air battles is the control system and what is contained in the control system. American government officials state that any attempt to compare Israel's air power and that of the Arab countries only in the number of planes is misleading and meaningless, without including the Israeli [command and] control system.

The Israeli Air [Forces' Command and] control system includes, among others, Boeing-R-C-707 planes equipped with electronic jamming instruments, Hawkeye, Phantom-R, and F-4-E control planes which carry special equipment. There are also pilotless aircraft, with very modern equipment such as electronic jamming devices and sensory equipment carried on balloons. By the end of the year Israel will also receive the Beech-R-C-12-D, a plane which intercepts communications. The equipment enables the transfer of intelligence information during "the required time interval" to the fighter pilots.

AVIATION WEEK reveals that proposals have been made to lease the Israeli Kfir fighter to the American fleet for use as an "aggressor squadron" acting "as a Soviet fighter squadron" for the purpose of training American pilots in Soviet aerial fighting tactics. If the proposal is accepted, International Flight, an American firm headquartered in Atlanta will acquire the planes from the Israel Aircraft Industry and will lease them to the American fleet.

AVIATION WEEK also reported yesterday that the president of the Northrop Corporation recently appealed to the secretaries of state and defense not to allow Israel to use foreign aid funds for the development of the Israeli Lavie fighter plane.

Northrop's president Thomas Jones wrote Secretaries Schultz and Weinberger that the Lavie will compete in world markets with American F-16 and F-20 planes which are intended for export. The weekly magazine reported that Israeli officials reacted to the American corporation's appeal by proposing that Israel will be ready to sign an agreement according to which it will not export the Lavie during the next 12 years.

A photograph of the new Gabriel missile, which is intended to be fired from planes against naval craft, appears on the weekly's cover. The new model is in advanced test stages.

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ISRAEL

KNESSET FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVES SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 15 Feb 83 p 10

[Article by Gabi Kessler: "The Finance Committee Approved An Additional Budget of 74.25 Billion Shekels"]

[Text] The finance committee of the Knesset approved yesterday the treasury's request for a supplemental budget, the second this year, in the amount of 74.25 billion.

In this manner the country's budget for this year will be 566 billion shekels, in contrast to the original budget, which was 475 billion shekels at the beginning of the year.

The additional budget was approved only in the finance committee and not by the full Knesset in accordance with Section 3 of the budget law, which authorizes the committee to approve an additional budget, if it involves covering price increases in existing plans and not for carrying out new activities.

Ya'acov Gadish, who is in charge of budgets in the treasury, announced that the additional budget is intended to cover the accelerated rise in prices this year (about 125 percent) which was not forecast in the original budget, which was based on an inflation rate of only 100 percent.

The Alignment (Labor) people on the committee attacked the treasury for the use of Section 3 in the law in order to increase the country's budget by 15 percent. Knesset member Naftali Feder said that in the recent past the original budget had lost its credibility because of the treasury's habit of preparing a smaller budget ahead of time and then updating it toward the end of the year. According to Feder, this proves that the treasury does not have the tools to forecast economic developments in the economy.

At the end of the meeting the committee approved the treasury request for the additional budget by a majority of 11 members of the coalition against nine Alignment members who opposed approval.

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BRIEFS

VILLA COMMUNITY IN WEST BANK--Prices start at \$108,000 each for 150 one-family villas now under construction in a new West Bank community, Tzamarot. The units will be ready for occupancy in two years. Tzamarot is in Samaria, a few hundred metres across the pre-1967 border. The closest community is the Arab village of Kafr Kassem. Ashdar Construction Company, a subsidiary of Ashtrom, is building the villas as part of a 400-unit development scheme in Tzamarot. The 150 one and two-storey villas are situated on a 600-square-metre fully developed plots. The land is privately owned and is included in the sale price. Ashdar is informing prospective purchasers that public facilities such as a country club, schools, a shopping centre and a synagogue "are being planned," but does not know when they will be ready. [Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Mar 83 p 9]

TECHNOLOGY RELATED JOBS INCREASING--The number of Israel citizens involved in professional and technological employment increased in a stable fashion, reaching 23 percent of a total work force of 1,300,000 people, as a result of industrial expansion. This rate is relatively higher than that of the U.S. (14.2 percent); Great Britain (11.1 percent) and [West] Germany (9.8 percent); according to former president Ephraim Katzir. [Text] [Tel Aviv YOMAN HASHVU'A in Hebrew No 40, 14 Jan 83 p 10] 9944

CSO: 4423/96

EFFECTS OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION IN SIDON DEPLORED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1374, 4 Mar 83 pp 67-70

/Article by Sharbal Zughayyib: "Its Crops Are Not Moving, Its Trade Is Shut Down and Its Utilities Are Wrecked: Sidon Appeals for the Legitimate Government!"/

/Text/ At every Lebanese "feast," the "pill" of the south is the largest in size, but also the most bitter and expensive!

The bitterness of the "pill" of the south at the "feast" of the Israeli invasion has extended to everything that exists--animal, vegetable and mineral. Its taste is still spoiling things for citizens in this most deprived area of the 10,424 square kilometers, in terms of living conditions and jobs, and is threatening further deprivation in its future life.

The afflictions of the southerner are worse than those of the citizen of Sidon. Just as Beirut occupies the status of the heart in Lebanon, so is Sidon the heart of the south.

The heart of the south today is diseased, sickly and threatened with damage if its treatment continues to be ignored for a long time.

The reasons are numerous. Some of them are the doing of relatives, but most of them are the doing of the more alien--the people who have come into the house and put their hands into the "sack" and the pockets of the people who own it, as if the past years of dominance, laxity and destruction had not been enough for Sidon, and the June war came to add to its record a new chapter of attempts at terrorization, subjugation and starvation which are afflicting people's livelihood and their necks alike.

What is going on in Sidon?

What are the concerns and problems of the people of Sidon?

What are the feasible solutions that can ward off the forces that are arranging and causing these concerns?

These are some of the many problems that were in AL-HAWADITH's mind, and which it took to the heart of the south. It brought back the following:

At the northern entrance to Sidon, the barrier of Maj Sa'd Haddad's "Army of Free Lebanon" is still in place. There are two soldiers at the barrier and there is a tank on the side of the road. The two soldiers observe the people going into and coming out of the capital of the south, while a municipal policeman belonging to the city hall regulates the vehicular traffic, which is subject to careful examination.

On top of the sandbags in the barrier, a large Lebanese flag flutters overhead.

Driving along the seafront expressway that leads into the city and its markets requires that one proceed cautiously and tortuously among the hills of dirt that the Israeli army has placed before the headquarters of the military governor in the city. In the main and side streets of Sidon, Israeli patrols proceed on foot and by vehicle, following the numerous incidents to which the Israeli soldiers in the capital of the south have been exposed. Some small military vehicles carrying Maj Sa'd Haddad's soldiers during their stay in the city also go about on patrols inside the city.

As in the other areas of the south, Sidon's main problem is economic. This problem has arisen from the invasion of Lebanese markets by Israeli agricultural products, imposing a recession on Lebanese agricultural products. This situation has prompted most of the farmers in the south, especially citrus farmers, to leave their harvest on the trees, now that prices have dropped far below cost. The losses come to more than 500 million Lebanese pounds in the case of the orange harvest alone.

In the Sidon vegetable market, Israeli agricultural production is being offered without any oversight or control. It reached the point where the wholesalers in Sidon met and decided to boycott Israeli goods and refuse to supply them or buy or sell them to retailers or vendors, but, as one of these merchants said, the Israeli threats "were more powerful than our decree." As another merchant says, "We are relying on the help of the Lebanese citizen and his refusal to buy these goods. We prefer to lose what we buy from the Israeli merchants once rather than lose economically in the total sense." The opinion of the ordinary citizen regarding this appeal is that the Lebanese merchants should give the poor citizen an opportunity to purchase his basic requirements at low prices, for how can this citizen be asked to boycott Israeli goods when the price per kilogram of Lebanese cucumbers, for example, is 12 pounds, and a kilogram of Israeli cucumbers sells for just 6 pounds?

Ibrahim Abu Zayd said,

"Our existence in itself has become difficult. As you can see, there are no roads, no nothing, and no electricity available on a regular basis. As far as telephones go, just talk, there is nothing to stop you--we in Sidon, and all over the south, hear talk on the telephone and do not know what it means,

while the cables are thrown about on the roads, the exchanges are shut down and the objects of the calls have become like people who are 'making fun of themselves.'

"We are asking the minister of telephones to come just once to Sidon to learn about its telephone problems close at hand."

Al-Sharbini, a retailer in Sidon, says,

"Israeli goods are cheaper, but the Lebanese goods are always better and tastier. A person who buys Israeli goods once rarely purchases them a second time, except under the pressure of need."

Another vegetable merchant, Nayif Qa'dan, says,

"I buy Israeli goods from the 'hasbah,' that is, a place where the goods are offered and sold at fair prices and the merchant gets a share of the profits.

"At the present time, the Lebanese markets are facing an onslaught of Israeli strawberries. They have large seeds in them and are hollow and not sweet. A 3-kilogram case of these strawberries sells for 50 Lebanese pounds, while Lebanese strawberries sell at the beginning of the season for 50 pounds a kilogram, their seeds are smaller, their fragrance is better and they have a greater amount of sugar."

Nayif asserts that the merchants tried to prevent these goods from coming onto the Lebanese markets more than once, "But we did not succeed, because we are controlled and compelled to buy them."

In Sidon we met with al-Hajj Muhammad Ghaddar, member of the AMAL movement command council in the south and a member of the banana growers' union. He said,

"We consulted a delegation of banana growers, who had landowners with them, and they assured us that there were Lebanese merchants bringing in Somali bananas via Israel and offering them on the market, which is affecting the local market and making the growers lose their whole crop. We will relay this bitter situation that the growers in the south are suffering from to the minister of agriculture in Beirut. The people of the south have lost much of their sovereignty, pride and dignity, and today they are losing their crops. We are appealing to all Lebanese officials to put pressure on the Arab countries, especially Syria, which buys agricultural products only through the cooperatives, which, in turn, have become a new monopolistic element. In addition, the Arab countries, including Syria, refuse Lebanese citrus and buy only specific types of it. This state of affairs is not helping the people of the south to stay on their territory and persevere in the face of the conspiracies that are being hatched against southern Lebanon. The Arabs are not working to help the people of the south--rather, they are abandoning them so that they will throw themselves into the arms of illicit forces, and are consequently compelling them to turn to other areas."

Ghaddar went on,

"It is not in this manner that the people of the south are to be supported, but rather by the sale of their crops and harvests. One should bear in mind that in the south agriculture is the backbone of the economy. Sixty percent of the land in the south is planted with citrus fruit and bananas, and 30 percent of the land, in the higher areas, is planted with tobacco. We are also demanding that the minister of finance set the price of tobacco this year and increase the ratio of the cost to the authorized price.

"One must make a specific point, which is that southerners buy water by the tank truckful at a price of 150 Lebanese pounds in order to irrigate tobacco seedlings, although the land in the south is the richest in terms of rivers and springs."

From the streets of Sidon, we moved on to the Lebanese University in the city, which the governor of the south adopted as his headquarters after the Israelis took over a portion of the Sidon garrison, turned it into a military center under their jurisdiction, expelled the workers and prevented them from staying on at their offices.

In his new office, we were received by the governor, Halim Fayyad, and asked him about conditions in Sidon and the south. He said,

"It is hard for us to talk about the issue in a comprehensive manner. Rather, it would be better for us to talk about the issue in contexts that are more specific, especially in regard to the departments.

"As far as the departments go, it is well known that there are regional offices in Sidon for every district in the south, representing almost all the ministries. It is very important that these departments continue to function and carry out the services assigned to them in a proper manner, in order to serve the citizens."

He went on, "The issue of the departments, following the Israeli invasion, faced a basic problem, which is the Sidon garrison, the Israeli occupation of a large portion of which caused us to face many big difficulties, especially as regards the retention of documents and records, as well as maintenance of the continuity of work in these departments, regardless of the vexations, difficulties and circumstances.

"At present, we can summarize the issue in the following manner: all the departments in Sidon are still pursuing their activities in an ordinary or quasi-ordinary fashion. The bulk of these departments are still inside the garrison, now that the sections in which the garrison is situated have been separated, after the departments in which Israeli forces are situated were separated from other sections where we still are located. In addition, there is a small number of departments which ought to have been transferred from their buildings to others, so that these would be rented out in order to guarantee space for the departments which no longer have offices in the garrison.

"This state of affairs that we are going through in Sidon makes it mandatory that we take such measures."

AL-HAWADITH: It has been said that some documents were burned and destroyed in the war, especially in the real estate departments, which has complicated matters in terms of determining land ownership.

Halim Fayyad: During the Israeli invasion, information was provided by officials in the Real Estate Registration Department and the survey departments stating that some documents had been scattered around, but we have no information on the loss or burning of records and documents. I believe that this matter has been dealt with by the people in charge of these departments, through the reconstruction and organization of the documents.

AL-HAWADITH: Every day news arrives of explosions in Sidon or attacks on the Israeli army. How would you evaluate the security situation in the city?

Halim Fayyad: It is clear that no situation, especially the security situation, can be sound and exemplary as far as the citizens go except in the context of the legitimate authorities and the resumption by the forces and agencies of the legitimate authorities of their role in full and their deployment over all Lebanese territory.

The Lebanese army has no role in Sidon. One should be aware that the internal security forces exist and are playing their part, although in a manner that is not acceptable as an end except in the context of the restoration of the legitimate powers, in the full sense of such a restoration.

In the context of the conditions which exist now, some thefts and violations have occurred, if only in a minor form. We do not now have an atmosphere or conditions that would enable us to ensure the comfort and freedom of citizens in the complete, desired sense.

AL-HAWADITH: Who examines complaints by citizens before the judiciary?

Halim Fayyad: Departments of justice exist in Sidon, especially the office of the public prosecutor, the investigating magistrates carry out their activity, and judiciary reviews are done directly in the justice /departments/.

AL-HAWADITH: But is the judiciary capable of bringing about justice, or is there any interference in its affairs?

Halim Fayyad: If matters do not return to their natural state and the legitimate powers, with all their forces and powers, exercise their role, we could fear that acts of interference will occur or that obstacles will stand out in the light of the current obstructive conditions, which are not favorable for the judiciary authorities' pursuit of their role.

AL-HAWADITH: Sa'd Haddad recently declared the incorporation of Sidon into his "state," and its subordination to his authority, and held a military

parade in its streets. What is the extent of the effect of this "incorporation" on your role as representatives of the legitimate authorities in Sidon, and what, as a consequence, is the reaction of the people of Sidon?

Halim Fayyad: The citizens in Sidon and all the south have proved more than once that they want only the legitimate authorities and aspire to have conditions return to their normal framework, so that they may be blessed with security, stability and confidence.

As regards the role of the governor and the departments that exist in Sidon and in the south, we are most anxious to follow up on the assignment of responsibility in all circumstances. Perhaps the more difficult and delicate the circumstances are, the greater the responsibility, and we will keep these official departments going and working in the service of citizens to avoid giving opportunities for the emergence of any vacuums, even in the administrative context. We hope that new circumstances will not arise which might prevent us from doing our job in this area.

From the temporary seat of the governor's office /we went/ to the headquarters of the Society of Merchants of Sidon, where we met with the chairman of the society, Muhammad Khalifah, who said,

"We, the merchants of Sidon, have been greatly affected by Israeli agricultural products coming into our markets. The losses from them so far have come to more than 30 percent of the annual income from commerce in Sidon, because large volumes of agricultural goods have piled up in the markets and there is little readiness to buy. That has created an imbalance between supply and demand, because the area cannot absorb all the goods that come into our markets.

"I would like to assert that the merchants who deal in Israeli goods are not legitimate merchants listed in the Commercial Registry. Indeed, they are ordinary people whose concern is to benefit and make a profit. One should bear in mind that Israel is deliberately selling its products in Lebanon at low prices and offering large amounts of these goods on the Lebanese markets in accordance with a deliberate flooding policy, which should lead to a recession in the case of Lebanese products, especially since the export of these products, especially to Arab countries, has now been suspended.

From the headquarters of the Society of Merchants of Sidon, we moved on to the hospital of Dr Labib Abu Zahr, the chairman of the Lebanese Grouping in Sidon.

Dr Abu Zahr summarized the grouping's goals as loyalty to the legitimate authorities and support for the administration in the course of the salvation process which is aimed at restoring the sovereignty of Lebanon and regaining its freedom, dignity and vigor.

Regarding the military parade which Sa'd Haddad organized in Sidon, Dr Abu Zahr said,

"I spend all my time in the hospital and did not see anything. I believe that this matter is too big for us to handle, and falls into the category of the

international game in Lebanon. In any event, Sa'd Haddad is an ally of Israel's, and everyone knows that the negotiations between Lebanon and Israel are very difficult and that what Sa'd Haddad is doing may be a kind of "hard line," or pressure on the Lebanese government to accept Israeli conditions in this negotiation process.

Question / In what way does the situation in Sidon today differ from that in the past?

Answer / There is an army of occupation in Sidon today. In the past there were no armies of occupation; our Palestinian brothers--may God bring them prosperity--engaged in conduct that made people complain about them. One should bear in mind that we were with them 100 percent until 1967, after which the situation changed a great deal.

Question / To what problems is Sidon exposed today?

Answer / The Lebanese Grouping in Sidon has been farsighted and has been aware that problems would occur in Sidon, especially after a number of people from the villages in the district were driven out of their homes as a result of some armed activities against them. These people are going back today, now that the obstacles have been eliminated, and they are fixing their sights on vengeance and the love of retribution. Therefore, our first job was to meet with the late president, Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil, whom we asked to issue orders preventing this kind of activity before it occurred. In reality, the late president had good intentions at that time.

Today, matters have become somewhat disrupted again. We hope that they will be set right before it is too late. When we met with His Excellency President Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil, we asked him to control the armed presence in the region, especially after the wave of threats of driving people out of their homes became aggravated. With thanks to God, all these matters were controlled, and all the threats came to naught.

Question / How would you evaluate the current situation in Sidon?

Answer / My evaluation is that it is starting to get better, in spite of all the obstacles. I am very optimistic about the future; God willing, it will be good.

Question / Your rapid emergence on the political stage in Sidon has made some people say that Dr Abu Zahr is preparing himself for a political future in Sidon. Is that true?

Answer / Of course not, because I am not a politician, and all the people of Sidon know that.

Question / Do you in Sidon face difficulties from the Israelis?

Answer / I believe that there are real difficulties, and others that have been trumped up. For the most part they deliberately trump up specific

incidents in order to push through other operations. They might deliberately decide on "mischievous fire," that is, random shooting, in order to surround a house or a section in a search for wanted persons or with the objective of taking over and reminding people that they are present.

They say that they came to protect Galilee; now we are involved in other things and faced with numerous matters, including the imposition of Israeli goods and the opening of borders without any control. That indicates that the goal of the operation is not just to protect Galilee, but that there are other things that are concealed though they appear from time to time.

/Question/ Are you optimistic about the future of the legitimate authorities in Sidon?

/Answer/ Of course I am. The Israelis will leave Lebanon, no matter how long it takes. The Lebanese must understand that this country is a "partnership," and the objective of every partnership is to succeed. The liquidation of small accounts and the war among centers must be postponed until another time, once we have won over the nation. The important thing is that our partnership succeed, and it will only succeed through an attitude of sincerity.

The journey in Sidon brought us at the end to the center of the municipality, where we met with its mayor, Eng Ahmad Kalash, who said,

"As a result of the latest events and the Israeli invasion, many losses occurred in Sidon. These losses involved all the public facilities in the city: more than 1,500 apartments were destroyed, more than 2,000 apartments were damaged, and the damages ranged from 10 to 60 percent. In addition, more than 400 shops were destroyed and more than 100 service offices experienced direct damage. In addition, the city hall was destroyed and its equipment was damaged, three official schools were totally destroyed, 15 schools were directly hit, and the only government hospital in the entire south was grievously damaged and stopped functioning. In addition, all the electricity, telephone, potable water, sewer, canal and road systems were shut down.

"The costs of this damage, and more, have been estimated at 1.5 billion Lebanese pounds. They have created a social problem for us, because of the presence of citizens who have no shelter or means of a livelihood, which has compelled many people to live with their relatives in small houses, indeed on most occasions in a single room.

"The role the municipality of Sidon has played in resolving these problems has been very great, and has been on a level with the scale of the tragedy, in spite of our limited resources. Here I would like to commend the role of all the social and philanthropic organizations that have cooperated with us in this area, especially the Red Cross, civil defense and scouting societies.

"I must give special praise to the organizations of Rafiq al-Hariri, who played a basic role in reducing the tragedy and offered supplies in every field. In addition, we must mention the financial aid that is being provided

us by His Majesty King Fahd, the monarch of Saudi Arabia, which has been allotted to repairing all the schools in the south. One should bear in mind that we have not received any aid from the Lebanese government, except for government employees' pensions. In addition, we have not received any other Arab aid, except for what King Fahd has provided, which is valued at 50 million Saudi riyals; 62 private and official schools in the south have been repaired in the course of 3 months. We have also received aid from the World Council of Churches, which was social aid and aid in kind, and included all the ordinary fields in Sidon.

"The Council of the South has tabulated the damage in the city so that everyone sustaining it may be compensated later on. The mayor's office has contributed to the provision of primary materials to some of the people whose homes were destroyed, so these may be repaired. We have also repaired some of the homes belonging to the poor classes in the city which cannot even offer manpower for this repair process."

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AGRICULTURE MINISTER DISCUSSES SUBSIDIZATION, GRAIN PRODUCTION POLICIES

Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic No 739, 16-22 Feb 83 pp 14-19

/Interview with Dr 'Abd al-Rahman Al al-Shaykh, Minister of Agriculture, by Dawud al-Sharayan and 'Abdallah al-Saykhan: "Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman Al al-Shaykh to AL-YAMAMAH: We Will Not Stop Wheat Subsidies"/

/Text/ His Excellency Dr 'Abd al-Rahman Al al-Shaykh, the minister of agriculture, said, "I do not like to talk about what we will do--rather, I prefer to talk about what we have done." These most significant words provide the best byword for this interview, in which his excellency the minister drew a panoramic picture of the scope of agriculture in our country. We drew a great number of facts from this interview, which reflect the size of the creative effort that has been made and is being made in this country. It is enough for us to realize that the kingdom produced less than 10 percent of its requirements 7 years ago, and that it has now attained a level that is above 80 percent of its consumption. We have only to pause to consider the significance of the figure which states that our production of eggs amounts to 1.2 billion a year--production which is in excess of our consumption and is sufficient for export. Realizing the concept of self-sufficiency, as his excellency says, must be considered a national responsibility. For this reason, the government has spent generously on the sector of agriculture, and will continue its support for this sector, proceeding from its belief that a firm economic base must be built whose basic foundation is agriculture. Therefore, the government's plans will continue until total self-sufficiency in the area of food is attained. Even after this stage is reached, this self-sacrificing country will continue to provide subsidies to farmers. There remains a further group of questions, which are of no less importance, regarding everything related to agricultural production in the kingdom. These are the questions this interview answers.

AL-YAMAMAH: As an entree to this conversation with his excellency the minister of agriculture, we would like to raise a question which touches upon all people's lives, and that is the one that is connected to the production of wheat in the kingdom. How large was this production, for example, last year, and how large is it this year?

The minister: The discussion of wheat cannot acquire its true dimensions unless we put it in its general framework. This framework is the scope of

agricultural development in the kingdom, which is a matter of the utmost importance as far as all citizens go, because it is connected to food.

The real beginning of agricultural development in the kingdom proceeded from the government's conviction that it was necessary to develop this sector, especially once it was confirmed to us that there were resources that would support this aspiration and would put it into being. It is fortunate that God has granted us the wealth that would realize economic aspirations for this country on all levels, among them its ambitions on the agricultural level.

That is the first and basic premise behind the government's plan, in terms of its insistence on the attainment of a comprehensive plan of agricultural development.

AL-YAMAMAH: Are there any other premises?

The minister: Yes, there is a group of premises which represent the intellectual foundation on which the philosophy of agricultural development in the kingdom is based.

One of these premises is that we believe that agriculture is the basis for the development plan, whether one talks about economic, social or human development. You can establish a stable, permanent economy only if it is based on an agricultural foundation first of all. Agriculture is the fundamental buttress of any economy which hopes to realize a true takeoff, because that is the basis: food.

Moreover, agriculture is the most important occupation in which the citizens are engaged. That means that any support for this sector on the part of the government will go directly to the citizen. When the government offers land or loans, they go to the citizen himself in an immediate fashion. When the government builds a dam, the water that is retained by that dam is used in a direct, practical manner by every citizen of the valley where that dam is situated. That means that the agricultural support which the government offers bears directly and in a practical sense on the citizen. The yield is rapid and obvious and the individual grasps it in material form. This all, in other words, means building the individual and building the society, because you are thereby turning the agricultural sector, which once was on the margin of life, into an economic sector that is at the heart of the context of growth and production.

On top of all that, agricultural activity, without being grandiose, is the most eloquent statement of citizenship, because it means involvement with the land, the soil of this nation.

Finally, we want to create a modern economic sector which will contribute to the development of this nation. Here I am happy to state that there has been a return to agriculture on the part of citizens and owners of capital. It is a return which greatly exceeds everything we had been anticipating. We have been gladdened by the people engaged in traditional agriculture, who had just been producing for themselves, producing an output which reached the level of

self-sufficiency, and by the return of these people, and their development, modernization and introduction into the realm of the modern agricultural economy. That is on the one hand. On the other, we have attracted a broad segment of investors who have capital, now that we have created a ready, excellent area in which they can invest, and, through that, express their citizenship.

Further, let me add to all that an important notion which represents the fifth premise governing the agricultural experience in the kingdom. What is happening in this sector now represents a total embodiment of the transfer of modern technology and its application in real conditions, after it is acclimatized or adapted to conform to our nature and circumstances.

These are the five basic premises which will set out the dimensions of the agricultural development plan in the kingdom for us. There are other horizons; perhaps the discussion of them may come at another time.

AL-YAMAMAH: This is the picture in its impressive dimensions. What about the details with which we hope to shift from a general discussion to a specific one? What about wheat production in previous years, this year and in the future?

The minister: I know that you are asking about wheat because of the significance that is attached to it. However, I wanted to present you with this general picture so that together we could become apprised of the strategic dimensions that govern the philosophy of agriculture in the kingdom. I would like to state that this is a complete plan, which did not arise by chance, and is not progressing without guidance; rather, there is a large general framework, and wheat production represents one feature of it, not all of it.

Perhaps I can state that grain production may be one of the most important features of this plan and that the production of wheat, specifically, has perhaps been the most important of that. However, we must always realize that there is a more comprehensive framework, which embraces grain, poultry, dates and so forth. I am not exaggerating when I say that I do not know of any country in the world, within the limits of my own knowledge, that receives the support from government that the agricultural sector in the kingdom receives. Land is given out free. Loans are given without interest, and aid can be as great as 45 percent. Production is purchased at a totally worthwhile price. What is left? Nothing, except work and production.

What I mean is that when the agricultural strategy was set forth, the necessary priorities were set out most carefully. These priorities were grain, principally wheat, livestock resources, principally dairy products, meat, the poultry and poultry products sector, then dates. That all means that the takeoff we have aimed at has not just been oriented to wheat, but is a comprehensive one that includes all agricultural development possibilities.

AL-YAMAMAH: Thus we can take wheat as an indicator of this comprehensive strategy.

The minister: Wheat, as an important commodity and a strategic crop, accurately expresses the significance of what has happened and is happening in the agricultural sector. Here we can appeal to numbers, because talk based on numbers is in absolutely no way deceptive. The kingdom's entire wheat production just 7 years ago was 3,000 tons, no more! This figure rose during these 7 years to 300,000 tons; this year the crop will come to 600,000 tons.

AL-YAMAMAH: What are the kingdom's total requirements for this crop?

The minister: Eight hundred thousand tons a year. That means that our production is now covering 80 percent of our requirements, while 7 years ago this production covered only less than 1 percent of our needs.

These figures may be modest in the abstract, but we must not isolate them from our circumstances. By the standards of production in the kingdom and the duration of its agricultural resurgence, these figures mean a great deal. They mean that the notion of self-sufficiency in food is being realized in fact, not in words, and they mean that the notion of a surplus that can be directed toward export is a viable one, because it is becoming an actual fact. Therefore they mean that this desert has indeed responded to the creative efforts of man and has become generous terrain which is liberally bestowing every bounty and, on top of all this, is undermining the notion which holds that this country has nothing but oil.

AL-YAMAMAH: There are people who say that buying wheat from abroad might be cheaper than producing it domestically. Why then all this concern? Why don't we turn directly toward importing the wheat we need?

The minister: That statement might be correct at the outset, but it is correct in a narrow sense that does not go beyond reality and look into the distant future, the horizons of the future. I disagree completely with these people. In the economic context, the domestic context and the context of responsibility, we must produce our own food. Wheat today, like many foodstuffs, has become a political commodity. Countries sell it with conditions. Why should I be the prisoner of some country or some conditions? I reject that. Why shouldn't I produce my own wheat by myself, so that I will not become subordinate to anyone? Then, if I have cash with which to make purchases today, that does not mean everything, because the people who sell ask not just for money, but also for conditions as well. The Soviet Union, for all its size, buys wheat on the sellers' conditions, even though it has the money with which to buy the wheat.

Therefore, we must not view the matter from the narrow economic standpoint which holds that buying wheat might be cheaper than producing it. This narrow view measures things by the criteria of profit and loss. It is not at all a matter of the calculation of profit and loss; rather, it is a matter of the development of national resources and the construction of a most important economic sector; in a word, it is the building of a nation.

AL-YAMAMAH: So it is a national issue?

The minister: Exactly. We are not doing this to be innovative. The big, developed countries are also doing it. America, for instance, has been applying what has been known as the national wheat protection project for 20 or 30 years, to retain its production and price level. It tells the farmer, "You must sell a ton of wheat for this much, and, if you do not sell at this price, we, that is, the government, will buy it from you, or at least will compensate you for the difference in price."

The Swiss minister of agriculture told me that the government subsidizes dairy products there at the rate of 60 percent of its price. Even though they can get dairy products at a lower price from their neighbors in the Scandinavian countries, they are careful to subsidize the agricultural sector, because it is a national sector and the government itself must stand behind the protection of it. If the European and American countries do this, why can't we?

AL-YAMAMAH: It is apparent that there is a comprehensive plan and that that is being carried out enthusiastically. More importantly, it has also been a success. When will the kingdom be self-sufficient in the production of wheat, in the light of this plan? If it does become so, will the program aid, loans and the purchase of crops continue?

The minister: It is not at all an issue of eliminating aid, loans and subsidy programs. In fact, it is closer to the truth to state that we are reviewing them in order to modify them in the light of new production conditions. During the transition from a time in which there was no production to the stage of self-sufficiency, or even beyond, it becomes logical to re-evaluate these subsidy programs and formulate them in a different manner which will be in keeping with the new stage they have reached. I would like to state, more clearly, that the matter is one not of continuing or eliminating the aid but of constantly reviewing it so that it will be in keeping, in terms of quality and quantity, with the nature of the production conditions that actually exist.

For example, wheat aid actually did exist before, on a basis where the country paid the equivalent of a quarter riyal for every kilogram of wheat. In one stage of development and production, the government found that it had to re-evaluate this program in the light of the new variables. A review of the program was indeed made, and the government started to buy the output at a worthwhile price. That means that the aid program was not eliminated but rather was developed so that it would be more feasible. The same thing happened in the case of dates and fodder: a review was made of the aid and it was formulated in a new manner that realized greater benefits. The results have indeed been very successful.

AL-YAMAMAH: We are now approaching a stage of self-sufficiency in the context of wheat. Do you have a notion, if only theoretical, of the form subsidies will take after this stage?

The minister: It would be premature for us to state that the Ministry of Agriculture will stop buying when we reach the stage of self-sufficiency. In

other words, I can state that subsidies for wheat as a strategic commodity will remain, but, when we reach the stage of self-sufficiency and beyond, we will have to review this aid program in order to reformulate it in accordance with the circumstances of the actual case, so that it will be more beneficial for the farmers, on the one hand, and for the domestic economy on the other.

AL-YAMAH: Attaining this economic goal is to be considered a superb national achievement, but don't you think that we have paid a great deal, in material terms at least, to attain this goal?

The minister: We have not spent more on agriculture than it deserves. We have actually spent generously on it, but these expenditures do not exceed what our upright government is offering other sectors, be they production or service sectors. The government is determined to develop agriculture in this nation. Nonetheless, the agricultural sector does not receive greater aid in comparison with the other sectors. The government subsidizes everything, from industry and electricity to trade and services. Indeed, the government subsidizes imported goods so that prices will be low and will be low for the citizen. The advantage of the agricultural sector here is that first of all it is a productive sector, second of all it has national features, and then third it is the sector that responds the most to subsidization. Its yield is more rapid and direct than that of any other sector.

Perhaps that is the reason for thinking that this sector has received more subsidies than others. When people see the great revenues that are in fact earned in the context of agricultural output, they go so far as to imagine that a great deal has been spent on it, although the money spent on it is not greater than what is spent on other production and service projects--indeed, some of these sectors have received subsidies that greatly exceed what agriculture has received in our country.

AL-YAMAH: I meant by my question to ask whether we have given citizens subsidies that greatly exceed what farmers in other countries around us receive. On that subject, for example, it is stated that farmers in the kingdom pay only 12 percent of the costs of the project, while the government defrays all the rest. Is that true?

The minister: I do not have the figures with me. Nonetheless, I must say that the citizens in the kingdom have been receptive to agricultural investment to an extent that has surpassed all expectations. It is true that that has been done with support and encouragement from the government, but it is also true that individual initiative has been superb. I know a man who invested 600 million riyals in the area of agriculture before he obtained any loans. This is the most exemplary model of good citizens who respond to the appeals in the nation and contribute their money and effort to building up this country.

AL-YAMAH: What about the future? Is the agriculture sector thinking about exporting? Could we become a prominent country in the agricultural area?

The minister: In reality, the goal is not for us to become a prominent country internationally in the context of agriculture; rather, the objective is for us to build up our country and lay the buttresses of the domestic economy on a firm foundation. That is our genuine goal. If one result of this labor of ours is that our children and grandchildren have a surplus for export, that is fine, but the plan is for us to achieve our objectives in full within the limits of the agricultural resources that exist here.

AL-YAMAMAH: The resources of agriculture, as is said, are land and water. We have a vast territory, but what about water, which is to be considered the artery of agriculture, and provides it with the wherewithal of life?

The minister: We possess tremendous water resources. Not everything that we possess is just oil, as some people might imagine. Indeed, we possess tremendous spiritual, human and economic resources besides oil. Foremost among these resources is a permanent source for agriculture.

Our water resources are very great in the quantitative and also qualitative senses. I believe that it is a national responsibility to make use of these resources before they are squandered and lost. We must make optimum use of them so that we can realize the goals we are aiming for, and we want to leave them to our children and grandchildren after us.

The amount of water that exists here can support a tremendous agricultural economy. If we do not use this water--and here I am talking scientifically--it will end up in one of two ways: first, it will turn into salt underneath the Empty Quarter, the Nafud and so forth, or second, it will run off into the sea. The question now is, if this is the situation regarding these water resources, doesn't it become mandatory national responsibility to preserve them, and make use of them before they are squandered and go to waste? Which of these is more beneficial for the coming generations: for us to leave these generations a good agricultural sector, with complete facilities, good irrigation and marketing, or for us to leave that as salt water under the ground, with some running off into the sea, in the name of preserving our water resources under the ground for the coming generations? I believe that it is deleterious to the national responsibility for someone to call for non-development of agriculture: to the contrary, it is true citizenship in the utmost for us to continue with the agricultural plan as it actually is now.

AL-YAMAMAH: Numerous questions are being raised about poultry projects, connected with the position of small investors who have been swallowed up or eliminated by big projects, and connected with the setting of the per-kilogram price, or the failure to set it. What are the features of the picture in the poultry sector exactly?

The minister: A great leap has occurred in poultry projects. It is a leap that was desired and planned. The plans were aimed at increasing production, and this has actually been realized. I can give an example of one poultry product, which is eggs. We have now reached a stage in egg production which is beyond self-sufficiency. It is sufficient for us to realize that we are

now producing 1.2 million eggs a year. Who would have dreamed of such a production? We have now started to think about exporting eggs and have started to allow producers to export to neighboring countries.

As far as poultry goes, we are on the verge of reaching the stage of self-sufficiency in that, although we started at zero.

These are the general features of the picture as far as poultry projects go. There remains the question of the small projects you are talking about. The nature of economic growth and development makes it incumbent on the owners of small projects to develop themselves so that they may become integrated with others. I do not state that these projects should be phased out, but I do say that they should grow, raise their level and interact with others in patterns of greater productivity. I would for example prefer it if agricultural companies were established here, such as the Nadik Company, in which more than 120,000 citizens are taking part, the fish company, which has realized profits in excess of 30 percent of its capital, prompting it to distribute profits amounting to 15 percent, the Ha'il Agricultural Company, in which tens of thousands of citizens are taking part, and the Qusaym Company, which is being established. The establishment of these major agricultural companies was an urgent necessity. The government prepared all the circumstances to help in the establishment of these companies and make them a success. There is no doubt that the existence of these major companies asserts, implants and supports the notion of agricultural production in our country. Moreover they bring people's efforts together and propel them toward horizons of major development. Above and beyond that, they regulate the processes of agricultural marketing, in a manner that brings them benefits on the one hand and brings benefits to the domestic economy on the other.

However, none of this prevents me from stating that the establishment of these major companies cannot be an obstacle or an alternative to individual initiative. Every day, numerous decrees granting agricultural permits are issued by us. We in the ministry encourage all these initiatives. Everything is proceeding in parallel. The major companies exist, the limited companies exist and are developing themselves, and individual initiatives have their own potential as well. We offer aid to all sincere active efforts in this direction.

AL-YAMAMAH: Some small producers might consider that the subsidies are still on a high level, so that small growers who have only 10 cows or fishermen who have only one boat do not benefit from them.

The minister: These sorts of small details have all been resolved by the large companies I have referred to. These small growers, for instance, do not need to have a dairy plant constructed. Indeed, the major dairy companies buy their output of milk at a worthwhile price and the farmers compete for that. Similarly, the fishermen sell their fish products to the fish company at prices that they would perhaps not get if they sold this output in the market.

AL-YAMAMAH: However, these major companies could be made subject to the interests of the major investors.

The minister: That is an important point and I would like to explain it to you and to others. The investors in the agricultural companies that have been established amount to only a small percentage. I will give you some examples. The capital of the fish company, for example, is 100 million, and the maximum belonging to each founder is 600,000 riyals. The point which you raise is in our minds as we are establishing these companies. We have not let the founders become everything. The bulk of these companies belong to the citizens and investors. For example, the Nadik Company: its capital is 400 million riyals, and the founders have a position in it of only 10 percent of total capital. This is a small percentage and can in no way allow for monopolization. It will give broad scope to the capital owners to participate in these companies, reaffirming the notion of the free economy which we embrace and attracting the greatest number of citizens into the field of agricultural economics.

AL-YAMAMAH: One question remains, which is perhaps the last in this interview, regarding seasonal crops such as vegetables. Have these crops received any form of subsidies or encouragement, such as those which other forms of agricultural products, such as wheat or poultry, have received?

The minister: The greenhouses that we are seeing in large quantities now specialize in vegetable production. These houses receive the full subsidies that all other agricultural projects receive. Had these seasonal crops not received the encouragement they deserve, we would not have found such tremendous production, covering the markets throughout the year. The vegetable projects are given easy loans, agricultural aid, free land, and subsidies for greenhouses, above and beyond free guidance, prevention and insecticides. After all this, there are marketing activities, which guarantee the sale of production in a good, integrated fashion. I might just request that markets be created and developed to sell the vegetables fresh, because our own nature prefers such fresh vegetables, which you can find only in the market, where the farmer and the buyer come together. This sort of market exists in all the advanced countries in the world, but here we are surprised to see people demanding that these markets be eliminated, on the pretext of getting rid of everything that is old.

I said, "We should cling to these old things."

His excellency the minister: The old things are the real values, the genuine materials.

I said, "The problem is to be able to combine what is best in the old with what is most beautiful in the new."

His excellency the minister said, "In other words, it is civilization. Therefore, I told you at the beginning of this interview that agricultural development in the kingdom is the true crux of the transfer and application of the notion of technology on this land. Therefore I always say that agriculture is civilization."

BANK TO ENCOURAGE FARMING, FISHERIES

Kuwait ARAB OIL in English No 3, Mar 83 p 18

[Text]

All steps have been taken to expedite the establishment of a credit bank, which will be solely responsible for handling all aspects of government subsidies and other facilities provided to farmers and fishermen in UAE reported Khaleej Times, recently.

Hamad Abdullah Salman, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries told the Khaleej Times that the proposed bank would remove the burden of dealing with subsidies from the ministry which would then be in a position to devote most of its time to research, planning and training and other such activities to increase local production.

The subsidy scheme not only helped farmers and fishermen to continue in business but also to increase production remarkably in these two sectors.

Essential

Elaborating further Salman said that such a scheme was essential for the progress of agriculture and fisheries. New investment fields yielded better income and the subsidy scheme was the best incentive for farmers and fishermen to continue their activities. To achieve this end free mechanised boats and engines were given to fishermen and vaccination and veterinary services for livestock, wells, installation and maintenance of water pumps, seeds, pesticides, fertilisers, spraying equipment and fencing materials were provided to farmers.

He said it was this policy that helped increase vegetable production alone from 40,000 tons to 160,000 tons with a surplus of 20,000 tons.

Meanwhile, under the new crop diversion scheme the ministry is encouraging farmers to cultivate new crops such as onion, potato and cowpea. At present 18 percent of the total cultivated land is used for tomato cultivation while water melon and musk melon account for 16 and 13 percent respectively. The ministry is now trying to reduce this by allocating only 10 percent to tomato, and 10 percent to water and musk melons so that the remaining area could be used for the cultivation of new crops.

Plan

As part of this plan the ministry had established demonstration plots all over the country, he said. Already 52 such plots had been established for water and musk melons and more were being established in new areas for other crops.

Furthermore, training program had been intensified to teach farmers modern methods.

Describing the water situation in the country as serious, Salman said, "the ministry has already installed 16 automatic water level recorders to record any changes in the water levels, 28 automatic rainfall recorders to obtain daily and annual rainfall details, nine meteorology stations and 19 stage level recorders to measure floods.

The ministry is constructing 43 water channels originating from the mountains, and these will divert 17.4 million cubic meters of water per year.

It was a part of this program that the ministry began constructing dams in wadis.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

ABU DHABI, JAPAN TO INSTALL SOLAR DESALINATION PLANT

Kuwait ARAB OIL in English No 3, Mar 83 p 21

[Text]

Emirate of Abu Dhabi and Japan will jointly instal the world's largest desalination plant which will make use of solar energy for its power, the English language Daily, Gulf News reported recently.

Officials from the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Department and a visiting 11-member delegation led by the executive director of the New Energy Development Organisation (NEDO) Tetsuo Yamasaki who were on a visit of several days to Abu Dhabi signed the agreement for the plant's construction.

Costs for the plant's installation amounting to 7.75 million dollars will be borne both by Japan and the emirate of Abu Dhabi, Yamasaki said.

Work on the plant, which will have an approximate capacity of 80 tonnes of potable water per day, due to commence within a month and completed one and a half years later.

Yamasaki said the plant was being constructed on an experimental basis although NEDO had earlier installed a similar plant but with a smaller capacity on a Japanese island.

He said the Japanese Government had chosen Abu Dhabi for installation of the plant because of the favourable sunshine there throughout the year and also because Japan had strong economic ties with the UAE.

CSO: 4400/265

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BRIEFS

OIL STORAGE DEPOT--Work has started on an oil storage depot, complete with a 13,000 tonnes storage tank near Fujairah Port. The main purpose of the depot is to act as a supply base for the UAE's East coast. Cylingas, a Dubai-based concern, won the contract for fabricating the storage tank, reported Grindlays Bank Group's Information Letter. [Kuwait ARAB OIL in English No 3, Mar 83 p 22]

BANK GUARANTEES FOR FOREIGN LABOR--The United Arab Emirates Government has tightened visa rules for labourers by making it obligatory for employers to furnish bank guarantees, reported the Daily. The guarantee will be of the amount equal to the return ticket fare and applicable to businessmen or companies seeking to employ five or more labourers, according to an order issued by the UAE Labour and Social Affairs Ministry. In cases the employers do not send the labourers back after the expiry of the contract, the authorities would deport them at the expense of the employer, using the bank letter of guarantee. [Kuwait ARAB OIL in English No 3, Mar 83 p 18]

CSO: 4400/265

AFGHANISTAN

ARMED GROUP CHIEFS REPORTED JOINING KARMAL FORCES

NFF Welcomes More Than 260 Chiefs

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 10 Mar 83 p 1

[Text] Kabul, March 10 (Bakhtar).--Over 260 leaders of armed groups from all the provinces of Afghanistan, who in the recent past were disillusioned and have joined the side of the revolutionary Government, attended a meeting at the headquarters of the National Fatherland Front.

Welcoming them, the first Vice-President of the NFF Central Council, Bareq Shafee, expressed the hope that, during their stay in Kabul and their meetings with the party and the state authorities, these leaders of the disillusioned armed groups will get to know better the measures taken by the party and the state for the welfare of the working people.

The visitors, who are now on the side of the revolution, narrated how the ever growing majority of the people are now realising the truth about the revolution.

One of them, Ghulam Rasul, from the Herat province, who was with him over 1,000 armed men and who represented over 100,000 people of his tribe, said that it was the dark face of Amin and his tyranny that forced the people to fight for their lives even though they had hailed the Saur Revolution.

Other speakers, Mawlawi Azizullah from Helmand, Ishan Baba from Baghlan and Rajab Ali from Badakhshan, in their speeches, said that everyone now know that the revolutionary party and the Government were working for the advance of Afghanistan and its people and for their prosperity, while the counter-revolution was engaged in killing people and destroying public and state property.

Elders Meet With Ministers

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 12 Mar 83 pp 1, 4

[Text] Kabul, March 12 (Bakhtar)--The second meeting of the leaders of armed groups, who have recently come over to the side of the party and the revolutionary Government, was held in the hall of the National Fatherland and Front on Thursday.

The meeting, attended by a number of PDPA CC members, members of the RC and the Council of Minister and the First Vice-President of the NFF, was addressed by Suleiman Laeq, Nationalities and Tribal Affairs Minister.

Lauding the solidarity of these people with the people, the party and the revolutionary Government of the DRA, Laeq recalled the crimes of Amin and his bloody band in the country.

He added: "We have not and will not forget our brothers, sisters and innocent children who lead miserable life in the camps and on mountains. Therefore, we hope that they would not be deceived any more by imperialism and that they would return to their homeland with confidence and resume their honourable life."

Disclosing the shameful life of the leaders of mercenary bands in Pakistan, Laeq said: "It is a matter of wonder that today Thatchers, Reagans and Begins, who themselves have caused tens and hundreds of crimes and traitorous acts against the Muslims of the world including the Palestine Arab people, shed crocodile tears in their so-called "concern" that Islam in danger in Afghanistan. But, our brave and Muslim people have listened to these fabrications and they have distinguished well their friends and foes."

Pahlawan Ghaffar, a leader of the armed group of the Sang Charak district, spoke in the Turkmani language on the cruel and barbarious deeds of Amin which forced the people to go to the Mountains.

He added: "We are 20,000 people and have 2,000 armed men. While we realised the reality of the revolution, we understood that we had been deceived. We availed ourselves the general amnesty of the RC, and came to join the side of our party and Government."

"We pledge from the bottom of our heart that we will side with our Government and with pleasure and high-headedly take part in the development of our homeland", he declared.

"It is our hope that the Government will take necessary measures to build schools, hospitals, bridges and roads which were destroyed due to the ignorance of the deceived men, and we ourselves, in our turn, will ensure security in our localities", he said.

"We are sure that our people have been deceived and they are ready to lay down their arms. And, it is our duty to make clear the facts and reality wherever we go", he added.

At the end of his speech, the Pahlawan expressed his hope to meet Babrak Kar-mal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC and the President and his willingness to visit the different parts of the republics of Muslims of the Soviet Union.

Then, Allah Nazar, a leader of the armed group of the Nawa district, Helmand province, in his speech, recalled how happy he and other villagers were when the Saur Revolution achieved victory.

He added: "But, it was not long before the revolution was deflected from its main course by the plundering Amin and his tryannical band."

"They killed our elders, mullahs and religious figures just for the reason that they were religious figures during nights. Therefore, our religious figures and mullahs dyed their white clothes into other colours to escape disturbance by the ringleaders of the Amin band."

Speaking on the miserable living conditions of the Afghan fugitives in the camps of Pakistan, he said: "It is not meritorious for us Afghans to live contrary to the customs and traditions of Afghans, to let our unveiled wives into camps which are close to each other. We cannot be happy with such living conditions. But, the ringleaders of the mercenary bands are leading a luxurious life at the cost of our other compatriots."

He added: "Now, the most useful work for the construction of the society in the interest of the working people is being carried out by the party and the revolutionary Government of Afghanistan, and it is my expectation that all of us and you, shoulder to shoulder, along with the party and the revolutionary Government, take part in the construction of a new society."

Another speaker, Nasrullah from the Chamtal district, Balkh province, said: "Everyone knows that there is no such a place in Afghanistan where a family had not suffered from Amin and his cruel band. But, these barbaric conditions did not last long, and the evolutionary phase of the Saur Revolution under the leadership of respected Babrak Karmal, emerged victoriously and the people and the revolution were rescued once more from oppression. Therefore, we are proud of having such a leader."

He added: "Brothers, we and you are free today from tryanny and oppression and have entered the new and evolutionary phase of the revolution. Henceforth, the homeland and people have a claim upon us that we should fulfill and not to let the lackeys resort to anti-Islamic and anti-human deeds under the veil of Islam."

He also explained how they formed a defence battalion in his district after realising the reality of the revolution and hearing of the general amnesty, signed by Babrak Karmal, and how the number of battalion became two and how they are taking part in ensuring peace and security in their region, and protecting the gas pipelines of the Sheberghan.

He expressed joy over assistances of the Government including the chemical fertilisers, the improved seeds of wheat and tens of other commodities to the residents of the district.

An 800 men group's leader, Mawlawi Saleh Mohammad Otar from Noorstan, on behalf of his men, spoke on the inhuman and anti-Islamic deeds of mercenary bands.

He noted how these bands are equipped and trained in Pakistan and cause killings and destruction in our homeland.

Reciting some verses from holy Koran, he expressed his strong indignation towards the ringleaders of the mercenary bands, these representatives of the US and British imperialists.

He also spoke on the cruelties of Amin and his bloody band against the people of Nooristan.

At the end of the meeting, Mawlawi Abdul Wali Hojat, general president of the Islamic affairs department, spoke on the policy of the party and the Government and its respect for the principles of the holy religion of Islamic, and explained the provisions of the Fundamental Principles on this regard.

He added: "Over Afs 60 million has been spent for the repair, decoration, painting of mosques, and the cash and financial assistance to imams of the mosques and fuel supply of religious places, by the department only after the new and evolutionary phase of the revolution."

"These deeds are the manifestations that our party and the Government attach great respect to the fundamentals of Islam."

According to another report, Nabi Kamiar, Public Health Minister, met these people in his office on last Thursday.

The deputy ministers and departmental heads were also present at the meeting.

Kamiar welcomed them on entrance to his ministry "whose doors are open for those who realise the reality of the revolution and are ready to fight against the traitorous elements to the homeland, the people and the revolution."

The minister added: "You have come to a ministry which is the real servant of the working people."

Explaining the destructive deeds of the counter-revolution, the minister said: "The counter-revolutionary elements have destroyed around 92 health centres along with all their equipments at the cost of Afs 500 million."

The minister urged the people to ask questions and present their proposals, at the end of his speech.

In their turn, Wakil Noor Mohammad from the Baghlar province, Zahir Jan from the Sar Pul district, Jauzjan province, Faiz Mohammad and Sayed Khadem asked a number of questions and presented proposals.

They, on behalf of others, pledged their readiness to spare no effort for the implementation of fruitful plans of the ministry for the health of the country's people.

Likewise, Ahmad Shah Surkhabi, Irrigation Minister, met the returnees on March 10.

After welcoming them, the minister said: "Your happiness is our hope. We want you to explain the realities and objectives of the party, the Government and the revolution of our country to the other deceived people."

A number of returnees, on others' behalf, delivered speeches in appreciation of the healthy and correct policy of the party and the Government, and their realisation of the reality of the revolution, the identification of friends and foes at the present conditions of the country. They also pledged: "We with all our might and capacity to cooperate with the party and the Government for ensuring security until the annihilation of last remnants of counter-revolutionary elements from the country."

According to another report, these disillusioned leaders of the armed groups, visited yesterday the Soviet House of Science and Culture.

Feda Mohammad Dehnishin, member of the PDPA CC and incharge of the publicity, extension and education department of the PDPA CC, Bareq Shafie, First Vice-President of the NFF CC, Sulaiman Laeq. the Nationalities and Tribal Affairs Minister, and a number of members of the Kabul city party committee were also present.

At the outset, a documentary film depicting the transformations and progress made in the Central Asian Republics of the Soviet Union.

The film depicted the freedom on religious rights and rituals of the Soviet Muslims.

Later, another film, depicting the great patriotic war of the Soviet Union, was seen by the participants with great zeal and enthusiasm.

They also saw the exhibition of photographs, paintings and handicrafts of the Soviet Union.

According to another report, they performed their Juma (Friday) prayer in the Pulikhishti congregational mosque along with other compatriots.

After the prayer, they prayed for the development and blossoming of the country, tranquillity and happiness of the working people and the annihilation of the enemies of the revolution, and for achieving spectacular progress under the leadership of the PDPA and the Government.

Chiefs Pledge To Defend Regime

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 13 Mar 83 p 1

[Text] Kabul, March 13 (Bakhtar)--The meetings of the leaders of armed groups, who have recently expressed their solidarity with the DRA revolutionary Government, ended yesterday with a resolution and a message addressed to Afghan compatriots who still remain deceived.

The concluding session, held at the hall of the Central Council of the National Fatherland Front yesterday morning was attended by Feda Mohammad Dehni-shin, member of the PDPA CC and incharge of the publicity, extension and education department of the party Central Committee, Bareq Shafiee, first vice president of the NFF CC, Suleiman Laeq, Nationalities and Tribal Affairs Minister and members of the NFF CC.

In yesterday's session, ten leaders of the armed groups dwelt on the savage crimes of the counter-revolutionaries and the corruption of their leaders abroad, under the US command, led by the criminal US imperialism, and presenting documents and eye-witness accounts. They exposed the conspiracies and plots of the counter-revolution, the enemies of the working people of Afghanistan.

First a representative of the security forces dwelt on the security situation in the country, and lauded these armed groups for joining the revolutionary Government, which is an important step to-wards weakening the enemies of the Saur Revolution.

Later, Wakil Nexam, a leader of the armed groups from Dara Soof district, Samangan province, in his assertions said: "Today I am extremely happy that, along with all my friends and brothers, who for some times were separated from our revolutionary Government, I again express our ties and solidarity with the DRA revolutionary Government and hold talks in this great hall to completely eradicate the enemies of the Saur Revolution."

"After the victory of the new and evolutionary phase of the Saur Revolution", he added, "our people fully realized the legitimacy and truthfulness of the revolution and with sincerity wished for unity with their revolutionary Government. For this purpose, I personally got in touch with the Nationalities and Tribal Affairs Ministry, to convey the desires of my people. This pious desire of our working people was warmly welcomed by the party and the revolutionary Government."

He added, "Today, over 700 of our people have been armed in the revolution defence groups, fighting against the counter-revolutionary elements. As many as 100 have been mobilised in the police ranks, ensuring the security of Dara Soof district, day and night, combating against the enemies of the Saur Revolution in the hot battle fronts."

Other speakers at the meeting were Abdul Baseer, a ring leader of the armed groups from the Adraskam district, Herat province; Zahir Nerad, a ring leader of the armed groups from the Sairpul district in Jauzjan province; Haji Zarin, from Shindand district, Herat province; Abdul Satar Roch from Ghorian district, Herat province; Sayed Abdul Latif from Shindand district, Herat province and Faiz Mohammad from Jauzjan province. They, in their speeches exposed and condemned the savage and criminal acts of the counter-revolutionary bandits and pledged every sacrifice in the defence of the revolution and its gains.

At the end of the speeches, Feda Mohammad Dehnishin, spoke in detail on the lofty aspirations of the Saur Revolution, the objectives and humane programmes of the party and the revolutionary Government, for building a progressive, advanced and flourishing society and the elimination of the cause of miseries of the working people of Afghanistan. The speech was warmly welcomed by the audience.

At the second session of the meeting, the text of the draft resolution and the draft of the message of the leaders of the armed groups to our deceived compatriots, prepared by a commission of the representatives of the leaders of the armed groups, were read out by Daoud Kalakani and Eng Abdurrahim, two armed group leaders. These were unanimously approved.

The meeting ended with the national anthem.

Chiefs Issue Resolutions

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 13 Mar 83 pp 1, 4

[Text] Kabul, March 13 (Bakhtar).--Following is the text of the resolution, issued at the end of the last session of the leaders of armed groups yesterday:

In the name of God, the Merciful:

We, the authentic leaders of the armed groups, have joined the side of our revolutionary Government and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and, at the invitation of the Central Council of the NFF of the DRA, we have come together from Hoot 11-21, 1361 HS, under the auspices of the front in the headquarters of the NFF on the basis of the holy axion of Quran which says, "Truly, all Muslims are brothers of each other and make a compromise between themselves when conflicts arise" and on the basis of the interests of all the people of the free and high-headed Afghanistan who need peace and for stopping genocide. This is our call to all Afghan brothers and sisters and all people of the world:

The events during the revolution and the experiences of the past showed that the Saur Revolution has not taken place as it was portrayed in the crimes of Amin and his compliances, but it is a revolution which has deep roots and its aim is to establish the equality of rights for all tribes and nationalities which are living in Afghanistan and for founding new relations, void of exploitation of man by man.

The new and evolutionary phase refuted and put an end to all the propaganda of the enemies of the revolution and Afghanistan, which was launched with the active participation of Pakistan, Britain, Israel, and the reaction of the region, headed by the infernal leadership of the US.

The issuing of the general amnesty decree, endorsed by His Excellency, Babrak Karmal, dated Saur 2, 1360 HS, and freeing of all prisoners unconditionally without considering religious, langugical, racial and ideological differences showed a true and actual picture of the people who raised the banner of the revolution.

We, who have signed this document, have realised the patriotic and humane policy of the DRA for defending bravely the gains of the revolution, creating peace throughout the country and preparing ground for social and economical growth and have joined the stronghold of the Saur Revolution, and we thank and appreciate the leaders of the party and the Government for inviting us, according to the tradition of Afghans, as their equal brothers.

We confirm and approve specially the peaceful policy of the DRA as a whole and its policy as a nonaligned country and the declaration issued by the DRA for solving the problems around Afghanistan.

We agree and approve comprehensively the political, economical and technical cooperation of the Soviet Union extended to Afghanistan, as well as the invitation of its contingents according to the friendly relations between the two countries and in accord with the charter of the UN, and consideration of political independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity of Afghanistan. And, we want these contingents to stay in Afghanistan till all interferences in the internal affairs of our country are stopped and guarantee is given to ensure this.

We say to all those spies and professional traitors to their homeland like Burhanuddin Rabani, Gulbuddin, Sebghatullah Mujadidi, Meia, Sayaf, Gailani, Mullah Mohammad Nabi, Moulawi Khalis and various other sold-out elements who have stood against the revolution that we and our groups are no more with them.

We approve of the policy of the DRA regarding support for and guarantee of (the freedom of) lawful performance of the religious rites, the positive customs and traditions of all nationalities and tribes living in Afghanistan, the plans and objectives of the PDPA and the DRA, the social economic, and cultural reforms which have been outlined in the main party and Government documents.

We pledge that we will utilise all our energy in the process of evolution of the revolution, the energy which we were spending against the revolution because we were misled by the internal and external enemies. We will serve our toiling and deprived people and put ourselves along with other hundreds of thousands of militants of the revolution under the guidance of the PDPA and the leadership of the respected personality, Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC and President of the RC.

We are compensating for the past through our action--that is, any thing we lost by our deception we will make good again. Our position against the world imperialism is one which has been chosen by our patriotic forces and the defenders of the revolution.

We have delivered all our armed groups at the disposal and in service of the revolution. We will turn the barrels of our guns toward the enemies of our revolution. We will not lay down our arms so long as the last remnant of the counter-revolution is present.

We invite all our deceived compatriots, who are still in the miserable camps of the military Government of Pakistan, or at the behest of the homeless lackeys and man-sellers whose names were mentioned above and who are engaged in destruction and fratricide in our country, to return to the valleys, villages plants and orchards of their beloved homeland and march towards an atmosphere of confidence, peace and fraternity as our countrymen.

Everything is normal in the DRA, the mosques have been expanded, religious scholars, clergymen, and holy places enjoy inviolability and the full attention of the party and state. The trade of the lackey-traitors and the reactionary generals of Pakistan in our hijacked children, women and sons in the miserable camps should be ended.

We appeal to all supporters of democracy, peace, freedom and justice in the world to condemn the US imperialism, which has caused the plunder and destruction of our free-born country and help the liberating Saur Revolution in the just struggle of the people of Afghanistan for rebuffing and rejecting imperialist aggression.

We have vowed to the revolution to sacrifice our personal, family and group interests for realisation of the just objectives of the working people of Afghanistan.

The Saur Revolution is righteous. The revolution will succeed.

And success is from Almighty God.

Karmal Praises Chiefs

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 14 Mar 83 p 1

[Text] [Kabul, March 14 (Bakhtar)--Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC and President of the RC, received the chiefs of the armed groups who have come to Kabul to express decisive solidarity with the revolutionary Government at the invitation of the Central Council of the National Fatherland Front, at the Salam Khana Palace, RC headquarters, and held talks with them.

Karmal was warmly welcomed by the chiefs with prolonged clappings.

He welcomed them to Kabul, capital of revolutionary Afghanistan. On behalf of the PDPA, the NFF, the Revolutionary Council and its Presidium, the Government and on his own behalf, he congratulated them on rejoining the side of the people, the party and the revolutionary Government.

In a part of his speech, Karmal stated: "Brother compatriots, the party and our revolutionary Government has pledged to put into practice what they believe and that is the truth. We have struggled for truth and justice in our country and will do so till final victory. We maintain firm faith in our noble and valourous people, who along with their revolutionary Government, defend Afghanistan, safeguard the freedom and independence of Afghanistan and build a progressive and blossoming Afghanistan.

Wakil Shah Nazar and Nasrullah Ibrahimi, two of the chiefs, on behalf of others, expressed gratitude to Karmal and assured him that they would not refrain from any sacrifice in defence of the lofty objectives of the Saur Revolution.

Leaders Visit Workers

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 14 Mar 83 p 4

[Text] Kabul, March 14 (Bakhtar).--A number of the armed groups' leaders who joined the popular and revolutionary Government, had a meeting with the workers and employees of the Housing Factory and the Kamaz Transport Company and informed the workers and employees about the crimes and genocides of the counter-revolution and the plots and conspiracies of imperialism and reaction.

The leaders went to the housing factory yesterday morning and were welcomed by the factory incharges.

Later on, they participated in the meeting, which was held in the cinema hall of the factory. There they were introduced by the president of the trade union, to the employees and workers of the factory.

Abdul Mohammad, from Kunduz province exposed the shameful actions of the counter-revolutionaries and said that these soldout agents are launching their subversive actions and terrors under the pretext of protecting Islam which they say is in danger and in carrying out inhumane acts against the laws of Islam and are inflicting material damages to the defenseless people of this country.

"We realised that we were deceived and joined in performing very mean actions, and we saw Gulbuddin Hekmatyar from near, and we saw how luxuriously he lives. He provokes people to commit genocide and receives money from abroad. But this money is distributed among his relatives and the rest of it put into his own pocket."

Mohammad Sharif from Baghlan also exposed the crimes of the counter-revolutionary bands and told the participants how these bands were killing people, burning schools, publicly useful institutes even mosques where the holy Koran was kept. He said, he realised that all those actions were performed under the pretext of Islam but were actually against Islam, and done on the instruction of their masters, Reagan and Ziaul-Haq and other imperialist circles, "So I decided to join my popular Government along with the people I was leading.

He said, "Now I have taken up arms to defend my homeland, my region and the glorious revolution."

Salam, resident of the Qarabagh district told the workers of the factory that he had 800 people of the Jamiat, Harakat and Mawlawi Khalis bands under his command and said that he realised that their ways were wrong. So he decided to separate himself and his four brothers and sixteen other persons from these criminal bands and join the Government.

He said, "We are grateful for the warm welcome of the Government that we will cultivate the land which has been left barren and we will take security measures for this purpose."

Wakeel Noor Mohammad from Baghlan province said, "I am very happy that I see my brothers and sisters again. It is four years since I have not seen my province and the city of Kabul."

He condemned the open intervention of the US, Egypt and Pakistan against Afghanistan.

Omarakhan Sefi from Baghlan province said, "I was attracted in the years 1359 to a counter-revolutionary band by the name of "Hezbe-Islami" and I was receiving military training in Peshawar and then was sent to Afghanistan for carrying out subversive actions."

"When I compared the justice of these bands with that of our Government, I saw that they were killing people, creating terror and plundering people. But the Government is providing people with the necessary means of life and is in the service of the people. So I decided to break with these criminals and join the revolutionary Government. Now I am ready to defend my people, homeland and revolution till the last breath of my life."

Totikhan from Kunduz province said in the meeting, "I was the leader of a criminal group and I saw so many mean actions performed by the bandits that are completely against the sayings of Prophet Mohammad and are condemned by him".

The participants expressed their all-out readiness for the implementation of the aspiration of the party and the Government and wished for the complete victory of the revolution, the good health of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA and RC President.

According to reports, at the end the leaders of the armed groups were taken on a tour of the housing factory.

They also had lunch at the factory.

Bandit Camps Denounced

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 14 Mar 83 p 3

[Text] "The main objective of the leaders of the counter-revolutionaries of Afghanistan is access to power, ruling the oppressed people of Afghanistan and reestablishing of the order of tyranny, oppression and injustice", Gul Rahman, a dynamic young patriot and a former member of the counter-revolutionary group called "Nejate Mili" (National Salvation), told the KABUL NEW TIMES.

Rahman is now in the front ranks of the defenders of the revolution.

With his two friends and five units of arms he has for even severed his ties with the counter-revolutionaries and come over to the side of his revolutionary Government.

"For now, we have realized the legitimacy of the party and our popular Government and the truth that the counter-revolution has been deceived and is on a wrong path", he asserted.

"Now we have fully realized that Islam is not in danger in our country and no one disrupt the religious affairs of our pious people. And it is nothing but the venomous propaganda of the enemies of our revolution, people and homeland when they say that Islam is in danger in Afghanistan, and profane irreli- giousity is being encouraged. The reality is just the opposite and we are all witness that the freedom of religion has been ensured and guaranteed in our country. This cannot be seen in any corner of the world," he continued.

Rahman added: "that the leaders of the counter-revolutionaries are thriving in the name of Islam is clear to all our religious people. Everyone knows that Islam, the sacred religion, never admits destruction of mosques, bridges and public welfare buildings. Islam is the religion of peace and truthfulness. Now our people have realized enough to seek to cooperate with their party and Government. Therefore, as a true and devoted son of my people, I have volunteered to take up arms, and with the cooperation of other patriots fully support my party, Government and homeland."

"As an Afghan youth, I tell those who have been deceived by the enemy propaganda that war, subversion and creation of dissensions, insecurity and terror are the most heinous deeds and should be abhorred. To build in the homeland an atmosphere of friendship, fraternity, affection and sincerity and cooperation should be the aim. It is up to every youth and intellectual in the country to expose the true faces of the enemies and the counter-revolutionaries-- to expose their anti-Islamic and inhuman acts, so that our other brothers and countrymen should not be deceived and, as a result of their deception, accept a disgraceful life like the counter-revolutionaries in Pakistan and Iran, he added.

Answering a question, Rahman said: "When the Nejate Mili counter-revolutionary group under the command of Sufi Gul Mohammad attacked our village, they murdered a number of our villagers who didn't pay attention to their propaganda and took a number of them along to Pakistan. On arrival in Pakistan we saw the camps of military training and noticed that ...e deceived people were living in misery."

"Over 15-20 persons have been accommodated in a tent with a capalive in poverty, disease city for three to four persons", he elaborated. "Everyone receives half a bread and some 'dal.' All and medicines are not available. They sleep on damp ground without any blanket, causing numerous contagious diseases for the other people of the region. The local people around the camps are annoyed, and demand that they should return to their homeland. But, unfortunately, the reactionary leaders of the counter-revolutionaries prevent them from returning home with arms and create obstacles for their return" he added.

"What I say is the truth. Realisation of the truth and recognition of the nature of the revolution and party led me to abandon the counter-revolution and adopt forever, the side of the revolutionaries and patriot", "Rahman said.

Karmal Receives Chiefs

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 15 Mar 83 p 1

[Text] Following is a resume of the extempore speech by Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC and President of the RC of the DRA delivered on March 13 at the Salam-Khana palace, RC headquarters, while receiving the chiefs of the armed groups.

(A report on the meeting was carried yesterday):

Brother countrymen,

First of all, I sincerely welcome you to Kabul, capital of the DRA, and on behalf of the PDPA, the RC and its Presidium, the DRA Government, the NFF and on my own behalf, I sincerely greet you on coming to the side of your brother countrymen, your revolutionary Government, to the bosom of your fatherland, the people, revolution, party and the NFF of the DRA.

Brother compatriots,

During the few days of your stay in Kabul, you have delivered passionate speeches in the meetings at the NFF hall, explained all the real, bitter truths about the people of Afghanistan, the revolution of Afghanistan, its friends and enemies, and I followed all reports through the TV.

Brother countrymen,

From the view-point of Koranic principles and the provisions of the holy religion of Islam and the international laws and principles, after realizing truths, the noblemen never wash blood with blood. And also, on the basis of the national traditions of Afghans, when two persons in opposition and two enemies vow friendship between each other, one even sacrifices his life for the other.

The Saur Revolution triumphed on the basis of the will of our fathers and forefathers, the lofty aspiration of our noble fathers and ancestors and the will of you people to Afghanistan under the PDPA leadership with the help of the DRA Armed Forces. At the very beginning of the revolution, we declared that our revolution is national and democratic and not only respects the holy religion of Islam, but observes its principles and provisions. From the very beginning, we declared that Afghanistan is an independent and free country and its independent banner is flowing in the world.

Since the emergence of Islam, Afghanistan has been, is and will be Muslim. The noble working and Muslim people of Afghanistan and the DRA Government will not let any satanic force in the world teach us lessons of Islam. It was the sharp sword of the Afghans which led others to the path of Islam and

history bears witness to the truth that our neighbouring countries which shout about Islam have been converted to Islam by the sword of the Afghans.

False Guise

Brother countrymen,

Today, a number of our compatriots, as a result of the provocations of the old enemies of Afghanistan, the enemies of the fatherland of Afghanistan, under the false guise of Islam, fight against Islam and, in the name of freedom of Afghanistan, fight against the freedom of Afghanistan. Their provocators in the course of history have been the enemies of Afghanistan.

Since the foundation of the PDPA, we have committed ourselves to say what we believe in and will put it into practice, and that is the truth. We have struggled in our country for truth, righteousness and justice and will do so till the end.

We maintain firm faith in our noble, valorous and working people who along with their Government defend Afghanistan, its freedom and independence and build a progressive, blossoming and free Afghanistan in the world.

The Saur Revolution triumphed for serving the working people of Afghanistan to eliminate the tyrant, oppressor and exploiting powers from the country, so that the broad masses of our people can be liberated from the yoke of despotism and can in full freedom perform their religious obligations, work and struggle for their honour and dignity and for building the blossoming Afghan society. The Saur Revolution is a type of popular revolution which triumphed for the well-being and prosperity of our compatriots and ensuring of law and justice.

The victory of the popular, national and democratic revolution of Afghanistan set the enemies shivering with fever. The enemies, including the princes, 'sardars', the noblemen, usurers, smugglers and tyrants all over Afghanistan on the one side and the foreign enemies, imperialism and the reaction of the region stood in a united unholy front against the revolution of Afghanistan. Regretably, as all of you explained, one of their agents, Hafizullah Amin, penetrated inside our party, revolution and Government and gave a deviationist, anti-popular form to the party, Government and the revolution which should have been in the service of the people.

Karmal elaborated on the treacherous plans and unholy designs of Amin, the renowned spy of the US CIA who wanted to disintegrate the free and revolutionary Afghanistan or join it to other countries.

The misery was eliminated with the grace of Almighty God and the will of the people of Afghanistan and the new phase of the Saur Revolution once again saved Afghanistan and its people from annihilation and drift.

Leaders Hail Cooperation with USSR

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 15 Mar 83 p 3

[Text] The allout cooperations of the Soviet Union with all the world especially with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are selfless and based on the principles of proletariat internationalism. The disinterested assistances extended by the Soviet Union are all in the interest of the entire progressive humanity and toilers. The United States of America and other imperialist countries want to extend and expand the domination of capitalism all over the world.

Allah Nazar one of patriots and member of the operative unit of Kandahar province who had previously been serving as a commander in the counter-revolutionary groups and later joined the revolutionary state after realising the truth of the glorious Saur Revolution and the lofty and progressive aims of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in an interview with the KABUL NEW TIMES after attending the all meeting of the heads of the armed groups coming over to the side of recolution said: The glorious Saur Revolution especially its new and evolutionary phase put an end for good to the oppression, cruelty and injustice in the country. The era of chieftains, landlords and feudalists has ended and the toilers of the country are in full control of their destiny.

The decrees of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are being enforced one after another in the interest of toilers. All toilers whether peasants, workers or craftsmen have direct role in the economic, political and social affairs of their country, said he.

In short, he pointed out, the gains of the glorious Saur Revolution caused the wrath and anger of international imperialism, headed by the world devouring US imperialism, led by Reagan, the recognised devil of our time. Reagan and Begin in collusion with the Chinese Hegemonism and reaction of the region resorted to destruction in revolutionary Afghanistan which is heading towards progress, peace, and social progress.

They wanted to curb the revolutionary move and create obstacle against the democratic and national revolution in Afghanistan. Their action is, of course, part of the policy of international imperialism because a glance at the history of mankind shows that wherever a revolution has triumphed and hereafter a movement has emerged the international imperialism headed by the US imperialism, which cherishes the desire for world leadership, has tried to hinder such revolutions or movements.

Allah Nazar added: if the Soviet Union and other socialist countries do not defend unitedly the progressive humanity, imperialism would attack the developing and newly independent countries with various intrigues in the form of old and neo-colonialism, and plunder all the moral and material wealth of these countries. Fortunately, the strong blow of the progressive humanity has always been dealt to the mouth of reaction and imperialism. The imperialism will no more succeed in plundering the natural resources of our country. The imperialism will inevitably face absolute failure in its sinister desire.

Answering another question Alah Nazar said: During its more than 60 years of friendship with the Soviet Union, Afghanistan has always been enjoying the Soviet assistance in different social, economic and cultural areas. In this connection we can cite the Soviet Union aids provided in industrial projects, irrigational projects, roads and bridges construction projects, educational and cultural and animal husbandry projects and hundreds of other similar projects.

This is an example of the selfless and disinterested assistance of the Soviet Union to Afghanistan. Right now the Soviet Union is giving all assistance to the revolutionary Afghanistan to defend itself against outside aggression and safeguard its national independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He added: The assistance of the Soviet Union in the course of history, from the course of history, from the victory of the Great October Revolution upto now, has been provided not only to revolutionary Afghanistan but also other developing countries and national liberation movements all over the world. In this connection we can cite the Soviet help and cooperation extended to all socialist countries and other small and large nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The assistance of the Soviet Union provided to Afghanistan after the glorious Saur Revolution especially its new and evolutionary phase proved once again to the world that the Soviet Union backs and support the progressive humanity and revolutionary movement in achieving their aims. This is done because the Soviet Union pursues a policy of peace, progress, peaceful-coexistence, disarmament and banning arms race.

CSO: 4600/474

FOREIGN TROOPS REPORTED HELPING SOVIET ARMY

Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English 16 Mar 83 p 4

[Text] OSLO, Tuesday

VIETNAMESE, Cuban and Bulgarian troops are assisting the Soviet army in Afghanistan, evidence presented at the international Afghanistan hearing here revealed yesterday.

A 33-year-old Afghan engineer turned freedom fighter, Mr Abdur Rahim, said a large number of Cubans were killed in clashes with members of the Afghan resistance.

A Vietnamese unit is guarding Kabul airport while Bulgarian troops are guarding oil and gas fields against guerilla attacks, Mr Rahim said.

These guard duties are apparently freeing the hands of the estimated 100,000 Soviet troops occupying the country since December 1979 to combat guerilla activities.

Forcibly

Mr Rahim was testifying at the three-day hearing before a panel of international experts, sponsored by all parties in the Norwegian parliament, which began yesterday.

The hearing has been organised in an effort to gain a better understand-

ing of the military situation in Afghanistan and the behaviour of the occupying Soviet forces.

Mr Rahim also said Afghan children were forcibly sent to the Soviet Union for political indoctrination to form "a new generation of Afghans susceptible to Soviet propaganda."

Several witnesses described how the Soviet army forced civilians to flee their homes by making the countryside uninhabitable.

Another Afghan guerilla, Mr Nazir Ahmad Farouqi, told the hearing that Soviet soldiers blew up 70 per cent of the houses in a village in the Logan region after the inhabitants had been driven away by a helicopter attack in mid-January.

Frostbite

Mr Farouqi said many villagers died while fleeing to neighbouring Pakistan and large numbers suffered severe frostbite as a result of extended exposure to the bitterly cold weather.

"Many villagers had to have their hands or feet amputated because of the injuries," Mr Gilles Albañel, a French physician who was in the area at the time, said.

AFGHANISTAN

SOVIET, AFGHAN TROOPS PLAN MAJOR OFFENSIVE

Bangkok THE NATION REVIEW in English 10 Mar 83 p 8

[Text] ISLAMABAD, Pakistan - Soviet and Afghan Government troops are preparing to launch a major offensive against Muslim insurgents in eastern Afghanistan close to the Pakistan border, Western diplomatic sources said here Tuesday.

The target of the likely attack by the combined force, timed to follow the close of the non-aligned summit in New Delhi, are the provinces of Paktia and Kandahar, they said.

The sources based their report on information on troop movements gathered in Kabul, the Afghan capital. They said troops are being mobilized from all over the country for the drive.

They said the attack will await the close of the non-aligned conference to avoid criticism from some of its participants who are against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. The arrival of spring will also make troop movements easier in parts of the country still under heavy snow.

Diplomats confirmed that a large column of Afghan regime troops has been withdrawn from the Panjshir Valley, just north of Kabul. The column which has arrived in Kabul is likely to be deployed in the offensive, reports circulating in the Kabul said.

Soviet troops, meanwhile, have been withdrawn from Herat Province, and from the So-

viet military base at Shindand, in Farah Province, both close to the Iranian border. Afghan troops have also been brought from Herat and Kargah. The Soviet and Afghan troops are now camping near Kandahar, so that they can be moved to the target area at short notice, sources said.

There has been no large-scale fighting in the area since a major Soviet offensive in January, 1982. Most clashes in the region have been insurgent attacks on Soviet and regime military convoys.

In recent weeks Paktia Province has been the scene of considerable rebel activity against Soviet and Afghan military bases and airports. A number of military convoys were reportedly hit by the insurgents, possibly prompting the Soviet and Kabul regime decision to counterattack, sources said.

They said Minister for Tribal Affairs and National Minorities Suleman Layeq is under attack by President Babrak Karmal's regime for failing to "buy the loyalty of tribes in Paktia Province."

Layeq, a native of Paktia, also had little success in carrying out a government drive to conscript army personnel in Paktia. The people of Paktia are exempt from conscription under old Afghan traditions. - AP

GAINS IN AIR, GROUND TRANSPORTATION PUBLICIZED

Kabul KABUL NEW TIMES in English 15 Mar 83 p 3

[Text] The transportation sector is of paramount importance for the production institutions and connects these with raw material centres. It also conveys finished goods from the productional units to the markets. It, at the same time, connects different region of the country, as well as the rest of the world. Thus, it plays a significant role in the expansion of economic relations, social welfare, exchanges of cultural values and finally promotion of economy.

Being a landlocked country, Afghanistan uses only two means: the land transport and air transport.

Air traffic is handled by the Bakhtar Airlines (domestic), of Ariana Afghan Airlines (abroad), the civil aviation department, and the meteorological department cooperate to provide air transport.

On land, the goods transport organisations number one, two and three, the Herat Transport, the Millie Bus Enterprise, the joint Afghan international transportation company, and the private conduct overland transport companies of goods.

As a result of the attention paid by the party and the state, and the cooperation and assistance of the friendly Soviet Union, for the first time, a state enterprise for transport was established sometime ago.

The transport organisations one, two and three and the Herat Transport were established in 1358 with 276 vehicles. In 1360 this was increased to 293 vehicles and in 1361 to 300 vehicles.

The Millie Bus Enterprise, which was established in 1354 to provide facilities for Kabul's citizens, and the private transport units that manage the activities of the private sector are the main organisations providing transport facilities in the country.

The Bakhtar Airlines was established in 1347, as a part of the air transport unit, with seven Canadian planes. Now it has 5 Russian planes also, flying the local routes.

The Ariana Afghan Airlines, another such enterprise, was established in 1333. Now it possess two Boeing 727s and one DC-10. Its main duty is carrying goods and passengers on the international routes and occasionally on the local routes.

Statistical data and numbers show that from 1357 to the end of 1360, 77,799 vehicles have plied on the overland routes in the country, which shows a 3.25 per cent increase during this period. The volume of passenger transport is 44.7 per cent and 47,903,600 tons of goods have been transported.

In the period after the revolution, the activity of the aviation sector in the international routes was 13,497,000 kms of flying in 21,653 hours. The number of passengers reached to 376,321 and goods to 2,581,314 tons. Likewise, in the same period, the transport volume on the local routes, from the first quarter of 1357 to the same period of this year was 81,751,400 kms 14,828 hours; the number of the passenger 301,637 persons and 269,5176 tons of goods which have been airlifted in this period.

For the development of the transport sector, 13 transport projects for motor vehicles and one project for the expansion of the Kabul international airport are being considered. Some of these projects, like the establishment of the three transport organisations each one able to service 300 Kamaz vehicles and one in Herat have already been completed.

The technical service stations in Kabul, Pulekhumi, Mazare Sharif, and Hairat and Tourghundi ports also have started functioning and the surveying and project work for similar stations in Kandahar, Herat and Kunduz will be started in 1362.

The Kabul international airport is being reconstructed and expanded with the technical assistance of the Soviet Union. The runway will be extended to 700 metres. Artificial canopies, parking lots and other facilities will be asphalted as a part of the expansion work.

The expansion plan of the airport also includes, construction of a terminal for the domestic airlines, a larger for eight Antonov-24 planes, installation of landing systems, expansion of the present terminal and construction of a kitchen for preparation of passengers' food (flight kitchen), expansion of the central heating system and the alteration of a diesel generator to 200 kws.

The investment for expansion of the airport will cost Afs 1,700 million, from this amount, AFS 610 million will be spent on the construction and structural modification. In 1361, Afs 80 million has already been spent on this project.

Courtesy: Haqiqate Enqlabe Saur.

CSO: 4600/475

REBELS BLOW UP GAS PIPELINE TO USSR

Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English 17 Mar 83 p 4

[Text] ISLAMABAD, Wednesday

ISLAMIC Afghan guerillas blew up the main pipeline carrying Afghanistan's natural gas to the Soviet Union and fighting killed 54 guerillas and at least 57 Soviet and Afghan government soldiers, diplomatic sources said yesterday.

The sources said the pipeline was destroyed last week in eastern Nangarhar province where fighting has been continuing since late February. They said 30 guerillas and 32 Soviet and Afghan government troops died in the fighting and 300 guerilla sympathizers were taken prisoner.

Incidents

In NEW DELHI, Western diplomats said Islamic guerillas shot down a military transport plane and a civilian airliner crashed in mountains during a storm in separate incidents in Afghanistan.

In another development, diplomatic sources in New Delhi reported that the Soviets had withdrawn most of their forces from the strategic Panjshir Valley, leaving two guerilla groups fighting each other.

The troop withdrawal from the strategic valley

lends credence to rumours that the government has agreed to a ceasefire with some Islamic fighters, the sources said.

The valley opens about 80 km north of the capital city of Kabul.

On two other occasions within the past month, the sources speculated on the possibility of a temporary ceasefire in the valley between government forces and guerillas led by Commander Ahmad Shah Masoud of the Jamiat-e-Islami group.

The diplomats have speculated that troop pullback in the north might be designed to relieve forces to engage in an anti-guerilla offensive in the south near the border with Pakistan.

Conditions of the ceasefire have been reported as a withdrawal of Soviet forces, a provision to allow people to return to the valley and payment of about US\$1 million (S\$2.07 million) for reconstruction in the valley, the sources said.

The guerillas have blunted six offensives during the last three years in the valley which is lined with guerilla caves, hospitals and prison facilities for captured communists.

1150: 4600/443

GANDHI GIVES UP IDEA OF CALLING GENERAL ELECTION

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Feb 83 p 1

[Article by C. K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 4.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has given up her idea of a snap parliamentary election by the end of this year and she is thinking now of the next Lok Sabha poll only in January, 1985, in the normal course of completion of its full term.

After the Andhra and Karnataka debacle, Mrs. Gandhi is reported to have come to the conclusion that she would need at least two years to retrieve the lost ground and restore the balance of political forces in her favour, if it is possible at all in the present circumstances.

From now onwards, she proposes to devote a lot of her time and energy to improve the image of her Government through a sustained effort at the national level to win back the confidence of the people. It is not without significance that, at an election meeting in Delhi yesterday, she promised to take stern action against any Minister, party member or public servant indulging in acts of corruption.

Though she continues to denounce regionalism, Mrs. Gandhi is reconciling herself to the prospect of more regional parties capturing power in the states in the wake of the waning Congress (I) influence. But this development is not seen by her advisers as a threat to her own supremacy at the national level, if she is able to deal firmly with her erring colleagues and create a reassuring impression that she is determined to cleanse the system.

Delhi elections: The Congress (I) leaders are keeping their fingers crossed as Delhi goes to the polls tomorrow in the municipal and Metropolitan council elections, which have come to acquire considerable importance because of the widespread belief that the outcome would be another unmistakable indicator of the ruling party's fluctuating fortunes.

As Delhi with its 14-million inhabitants has become a miniature India in itself, with nearly three of the major states represented here, the Congress (I)

has not spared either money or effort to transform these local elections into a major national event in the hope that even a marginal victory would help dispel the misgivings of the ruling party itself that the point of diminishing returns has already been reached two years before the next parliamentary elections. But it would be equally misleading to jump to the conclusion that a setback in Delhi for the Congress (I) would mean that the party has started losing ground in the north as well in the wake of its southern reverses.

The Prime Minister will not be far wrong in assuming that the main lesson of the Andhra and Karnataka ordeal for her party is that it should shed its complacency and start readjusting itself to the changing political situation. The visit of the new Andhra Chief Minister, Mr. N. T. Rama Rao, has helped to reassure her that it is both possible and desirable to seek and establish a harmonious relationship between the Congress (I)-run Central Government and the non-Congress (I)-run Ministries in the States.

Regional personality: It is against this general background that Mrs. Gandhi spoke of Centre-State relations today at the silver jubilee celebrations of the Institute of Indian Law Association giving a new orientation to it. In emphasising the need for strengthening the concepts of unity in diversity that hold the country together, she conceded that the relationship should also provide for the development of the regional personality within the composite character of the nation.

The intention evidently is to develop this theme progressively during the next two years to enable the Centre and States to evolve a more equitable pattern of relationship that is broadly compatible with regional sentiments and national imperatives.

In attempting to temper firmness with flexibility, Mrs. Gandhi appears to be very particular that it should not be mistaken for weakness on her part. The NTR visit to Delhi has helped to set her own mind at rest that it should not be difficult to establish a good working relationship with non-Congress (I) Chief Ministers.

CSO: 46/6/1735

CPI-M STATEMENT ON DELHI ELECTIONS REPORTED

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 8 Feb 83 p 10

[Text] The CPI-M feels that the people's vote in the latest elections to the Delhi Metropolitan Council and Corporation 'is certainly not a vote endorsing Congress-I policies'.

In a press statement on the election results, the party's politbureau on Monday said the outcome of the elections ran contrary to expectations since the Congress-I could capitalise on the absence of a viable electoral alternative to express the people's discontent.

In a bid to explain the debacle of the four-party Progressive Democratic Front of which the CPI-M was a constituent, it pointed out that it was a 'hurriedly formed combination' and 'proved too weak to offer serious resistance to the Congress-I'.

As for the BJP the main opposing party the politbureau said despite the burning grievances against the Congress-I the minorities and other democratic forces were not prepared to support an organisation 'whose Hindu communal outlook and practice is beyond doubt'.

The Congress-I was thus able to profit from this weakness of the BJP which the people rejected.

Moreover the 'people had seen the BJP in control of the two bodies earlier and that had meant no change from Congress policies'.

The CPI-M leadership lamented that notwithstanding the collapse of law and order in Delhi, the blatant corruption in the administration and the rising prices the Congress-I came out victorious winning a majority of seats in the two bodies.

Burdensome

However, the party predicted that the Congress-I would find its majority 'too burdensome' and the 'same people who voted for it will be in action against the economic hardships and the policies of the (ruling) party'.

Enunciating the task of the Left and democratic forces, it said these forces should lead the people's discontent and defend the mass interests by fighting for their welfare. 'The Left forces should know that there is no endorsement of the Congress-I policies and the masses are no longer in a mood to accept further burdens of corruption or taxation', it added.

CSO: 4600/1744

WEAKNESS OF GANDHI RESPONSE TO DISCONTENT NOTED

Madras THE HINDU in English 6 Feb 83 p 2

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

INDIRA-watchers in Delhi who have been expecting some dramatic moves by her after the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka debacle to recapture the mood of the people are quite disappointed with her faltering response to the mounting discontent in the country, which is leading to a rapid decline of the prestige of her Government. They are perplexed and even dismayed by her apparent hesitation to take any drastic steps to regain the lost initiatives, restore the faith of the nation and improve the quality of her rule, before the malaise gets deeper and becomes too late to engage in a salvage operation in the two years now left for the next parliamentary elections.

The much talked of drive to purify the spirit of the ruling party and cleanse the decadent political system has proved to be a non-starter, since the few changes that have been made have neither impressed her supporters nor satisfied her critics that she is all set to give the country a new sense of direction. The old Indira spark is clearly missing and a great psychological moment to administer a shock treatment to an indolent and lethargic government has been lost. The result is a further wave of disillusionment with her highly personalised style of leadership and the incapacity of her cohorts to govern this complex country in her name.

True test

The true test of success in politics is a readiness to learn the right lessons from past mistakes, an ability to act decisively and courageously in moments of crisis or challenge. There is no place for any half-way measures in dealing with corruption, incompetence or indiscipline, since what matters most in the final analysis in public life is rectitude much more than fortitude, probity more than competence.

A leader can ill-afford to remain a prisoner of conflicting advice in dealing with a montage of corroding influences that have corrupted politics and coarsened public life. The confidence of the people can be sustained only with a reassuring feeling that the leader can

change and will change under pressure of events to be able to respond to different situations with imagination even in these days of declining values and flexible consciences.

The Indians are generally a generous and forgiving people who are not capable of bearing any lasting resentment, let alone a thirst for revenge or a passion for retribution. The inflamed emotions, fanned by bitter controversies or festered by lasting grievances, die down when some visible amends are made or even apologies offered for past lapses. The people get infuriated only when those in authority appear to be insensitive to even well-meaning criticism and tend to shield the discredited with an apparent disdain for public opinion.

More destructive

The avenging fury of the electorate that struck the Congress (I) in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka pricked the bubble of Mrs. Gandhi's invincibility in the two southern States — and proved beyond doubt that the infallibility of any leader is no more than an orchestrated myth under Indian conditions. It is the precipitous decline of moral authority that is more destructive in the long run than a mere erosion of political influence through the vagaries of the electoral process or non-performance of a government.

The Prime Minister has certainly lost a great opportunity to transform the recent reverse suffered by her party in the South into a good occasion for some serious introspection, if not atonement, to identify the reasons for the failure of her government and take suitable corrective action. She tried to explain away the humiliation, without boldly facing the consequences of it, by finding faults with the electoral strategy and campaign tactics of her party, instead of getting down to the root causes of it.

The result is that she has failed to see what happened in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in its true context, that it was a logical culmination of the steady setback the Congress (I) suffered in several States in the last two years demonstrating in no uncertain terms the growing disillusionment of the people with its rule.

Little comfort

It is little comfort for the Congress (I) to imagine that the regional party that has replaced it in Andhra Pradesh with such a shattering impact, much more than the uneasy coalition in neighbouring Karnataka, would sooner or later be faced with the same sort of cruel dilemmas that have been plaguing it. It is one thing to capture the mood of a disillusioned people in a moment of their psychic downturn, so the argument runs, but another thing to utilise the shock waves generated by the wind of change to make the party disciplined and dedicated and capable of implementing its promises and living up to the expectations of the people.

But in consoling itself with these self-deceptive thoughts, the Congress (I) is conveniently forgetting that before Mr. N. T. Rama Rao begins to run out of steam or gets enmeshed in the contradictions of Indian politics in his limited domain, the Congress (I) itself will be facing its moment of truth in another two years in 10 more States in the wake of the next parliamentary election.

If it is not able to reform itself and acquire a more acceptable image in the course of this year, it would be too late to increase its credibility next year before facing the people again. It is in this context that the Prime Minister's current attempts to improve the quality of her government have come to acquire crucial importance for the very survival of her party in its present form. Nobody expects that the performance of her government would get better overnight by simply sacking a few more nondescript Ministers or sending some corrupt officials to prison. A concerted effort has to be made to tone up the administration both at the political and bureaucratic levels to be able to inspire greater confidence in its integrity and competence.

Lack of parallel measures

A starting point for this exercise must be the curbing of political corruption, even if it cannot be eradicated in the present socio-economic climate. After dismissing it as part of a global phenomenon that was not peculiar to India alone, Mrs. Gandhi has at last come out, better late than never, strongly against corruption along with a plea for a series of other steps to refurbish the image of her government.

But her directive to various ministries to step up vigilance and plug the loopholes to prevent corruption has been taken generally with a pinch of salt, since she has not initiated any parallel measures to discourage the indiscriminate collection of money for political purposes or personal benefit by her own party colleagues.

It is for this reason that the critics within the ruling party itself have been dismissing the effort as either an eyewash or part of window dressing to create an illusion of self-purification to mislead the people.

As perhaps the last in the long lineage of truly national figures that have dominated the Indian political scene from the days of the Independence movement, Mrs. Gandhi has been accepted by the people as a leader in her

own right. Her right to rule the country according to her lights on the basis of the mandate she has received has not been questioned, but her right to foist unwanted and undeserving persons on the nation, whether it is at the Centre or in the States, has certainly been deplored even by those who are otherwise well disposed towards her.

Narrow cult

The absence of a proper dividing line between her tolerance of incompetence and her disinclination to deal sternly with those guilty of various transgressions has tended to confuse the legitimacy of her position as Prime Minister and the impropriety of some of her actions. The concept of personal loyalty, reduced to a narrow cult by her fawning sycophants for feathering their own nests, has been allowed to acquire such sickening dimensions that she got progressively alienated from the intelligentsia in the country, so much so that very few talented persons were left in her inner circle.

The political, psychological and intellectual vacuum created by this alienation emboldened the power brokers in her entourage to function as extra-constitutional authorities interfering in the functioning of both the party and the government, besides indulging with impunity in all kinds of malpractices.

The cleansing process that she has initiated is a modest attempt to set things right, which should be welcomed for what it is worth without decrying it. The decision to apply the tenure rule strictly, for example, is a welcome step aimed at removing the growing imbalance in the quality of the Central and State administrations. But it is necessary for her to probe deeper why so many IAS officers want to get away from the States and find berths at the Centre, or even retire prematurely from service in sheer disgust over the increasing political interferences in administration. It is an open secret that some of the Ministers have been pressuring officials not only to indulge in administrative improprieties to help their cohorts but also engage in fund collections.

Disaffected

The police too has been disaffected because it has been politicised and often used as a strong arm of the party in power in many States. It is scandalous in the extreme that the Intelligence Bureau should be asked to screen and report on prospective candidates for elections, or keep an eye on erstwhile colleagues who have fallen from favour for whatever reason. It is equally well-known how the other investigative and enforcement agencies have been used to persecute political opponents or others who have refused to cough out a part of their ill-gotten wealth for the benefit of their patrons.

The practice of rewarding pliable judges with jobs after retirement has also impaired the independence of the judiciary, besides encouraging even serving judges to engage in political controversies to placate those in power. Similarly, the habit of appointing active politicians as Governors and permitting them to re-enter public life to become Ministers at their

convenience has strained Centre-State relations, since they have been openly subserving the interests of the ruling party that has appointed them. The Government has also not hesitated to reward even retired chairmen and

members of Public Service Commissions against the spirit of the Constitution.

It is high time Mrs. Gandhi took a critical look at the state of the nation and did some introspection to pinpoint the sources and causes of failure,

CSO: 4600/1736

GANDHI SPEECH ON LAW INSTITUTE ANNIVERSARY REPORTED

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Feb 83 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Feb. 4.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has called for strengthening the unity of the country and warned the elements challenging its territorial integrity.

Today India's survival as a nation depended on a wider vision of unity, based on the interdependence of the States and the Centre and on secularism and social justice, Mrs. Gandhi said while inaugurating the silver jubilee celebrations of the Indian Law Institute here on Friday.

Referring to the debate on Centre-State relations, Mrs. Gandhi said it was not a matter of merely sharing finances or powers, nor a question of a strong Centre and weak States or vice-versa. "It concerns the preservation and consolidation of our unique national character, of being one-in-many and many-in-one", she said.

The Prime Minister said U.S.-type federalism would not suit Indian conditions, because India's diversity was qualitatively different from that of the U.S. "We had to and do make adequate provision for the expansion of regional personality within the ambit of the composite character of our nation", she said.

The role of law: Mrs. Gandhi said developing countries like India had fewer options. In any society, the elite was the peak. It could rise or even stay where it was if the base was strong enough to sustain the height. "Our base is the majority of the population, who are the poor and economically backward. So taking special care of these sections is not a matter of pity or charity but a national necessity. Therefore, the law, far from being chained to the status quo, should be in the vanguard of transformation and progress. It should be a force for cohesion and unity, ever vigilant in the nation's interest."

Referring to the groups who, at the slightest provocation, were ready to burn copies of the Constitution and the elements who challenge the territorial integrity of India

and did not recognise the equality of religions, Mrs. Gandhi said even when India was not politically one, there was an invisible bond forged by our tradition of tolerance.

The Prime Minister said the threat to our independence, democratic system and the rule of law came from those who were not fully secular, those who did not put their duty to the country above considerations of caste, region and language, and those who use their power to exploit the poor and the weak.

Views in judgments: The Prime Minister described as "a disturbing feature", the attempt to use courts for political ends and to obtain judgments, which, instead of interpreting the law as it stood, pronounced what it should be in their view.

Some of her Government's social laws had been criticised as "utopian" and ahead of time; carried out without adequate preparation of public opinion.

Reform was always ahead of time and entrenched interests were not easily dethroned, the Prime Minister said adding that legislation was itself a means of education.

The greatest reformers had looked to the law as an instrument of social justice, Mrs. Gandhi said.

She said her experience in the last two decades as a legislator and earlier in the Social Welfare Board, showed that some essential and basically beneficial enactments or court judgments had intended consequences. — PTI.

Chief Justice's call: Presiding over the inauguration of the celebrations, the Supreme Court Chief Justice Mr. Y. V. Chendrachud, called upon the Law Institute to suggest reforms to bring the law abreast of changing social needs.

He said public discussion about the law, lawyers and legal reforms had never been as audible as it was today. Therefore it was essential to preserve the stability and coherence of law.

LABOR MINISTRY PARLIAMENTARY PANEL MEETS 4 FEB

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 5 Feb 83 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, February 4.

Members of the parliamentary consultative committee for the labour ministry were agreed today that the ministry should have an active role in ensuring industrial peace but were divided in their assessment of the measures it had taken in this direction.

They expressed concern over prolonged strikes and lock-outs and also raised the issue of changes in labour legislation.

Some MPs claimed that the decision arrived at the national labour conference last September must be backed by legislative sanction, but other participants contended that these militated against the ethics of trade union movement.

/Meanwhile, according to reports received at labour bureau, the number of mandays lost because of industrial disputes from April up to the end of August was 22.67 million./ [in boldface]

This does not include the losses because of the textile strike in Bombay which started on January 18 last year. However, according to information directly received from the Maharashtra government, the estimated loss in mandays because of the textile strike till the end of August 31 last comes to 43.16 million.

The labour ministry has claimed that the position regarding industrial relations situation is being continuously monitored and brought to the notice of the state governments for corrective steps.

Strikes, Lock-outs

A labour relations monitoring unit has been functioning in the ministry of labour and rehabilitation to take timely action through preventive mediation to resolve industrial disputes and control of industrial unrest. It also acts as a clearing house for information on industrial relations.

Between January and October last year, a total number of 422 cases, 320 relating to strikes and 122 to lock-outs, were reported to this unit. As a result of steps taken, 250 strikes were called off and 73 lock-outs lifted.

According to the ministry, the industrial relations machinery both at the Centre and in the states are making continuous efforts for quick settlement of the industrial disputes. The conciliation and adjudication machineries both at the Centre and in the states are being further strengthened. The number of industrial courts and tribunals is being increased.

Steps are also being taken to set up additional regional offices, creation of additional posts and prescribing norms for disposal of minimum number of cases with consideration to the quality of disposal.

/As for the Bombay strike, as on January 19, the total attendance in 57 textile mills stood at 78,374 (65,491 workers and 12,883 technical and supervisory staff) excluding watch and ward staff numbering 6,000 who are on duty./ [in boldface]

The ministry has clarified that workers continued to receive medical benefits in accordance with the provisions of the ESI (general) regulations which stipulate that an insured person in respect of whom 13 weekly contributions have been paid in a contribution period shall be entitled to medical benefit till the end of the period.

The insured persons being on strike since October 1981/January 1982 and no wages having been paid to them for the strike period, no contributions have been payable or deducted for the period of strike. This being the position, the striking workers would cease to be entitled to medical benefit on the expiry of the benefit period corresponding to the contribution period.

It is pointed out that the discontinuance of medical benefit in such cases is in accordance with the provisions of the ESI Act and the regulations framed under it and the question of any violation of law by the ESI authorities does not arise.

Besides the general labour situation, social security schemes figured in the discussions of the consultative committee. The minister, Mr. Veerendra Patil, informed the MPs that the government had approved the introduction of the system of pass books for subscribers of the employees' provident fund from April on an experimental basis in the Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh regions.

Mr. Patil stated that the system would replace issue of individual statements of annual accounts. It would result in substantial saving in the printing of forms and postal charges. It would also keep the subscribers informed of their balance in the employee's provident fund.

The minister stated that the performance in the rehabilitation of bonded labour in Bihar, Karnataka, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh had been above 60 per cent while in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan it had been less.

PLANS FOR REVIEW OF CENTER-STATE TIES CONSIDERED

Madras THE HINDU in English 8 Feb 83 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Feb. 7.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, is reported to be looking into the demand for the appointment of a committee of experts including some eminent jurists to go into all aspects of Centre-State relations, and suggest how these links could be strengthened within the present constitutional framework, in the light of the experience gained since independence.

But there are differing opinions on the subject within the inner circles of the Central Government, especially on the timing of the proposed decision, because of the apprehension that the Opposition parties which have been pressing for such a review would regard it as a triumph for their campaign for greater devolution of powers to the States.

The Centre is concerned more immediately about the Akali reaction since the hardliners among them might feel encouraged to insist on an acceptance of at least the substance of their Anandpur Sahib resolution, or at any rate try to keep the issue open in one form or the other until the completion of the proposed review of the Centre-State relations. At the same time, the Prime Minister's advisers are not unaware of the hazards of letting the regional parties in power continue to whip up passions over the alleged step-motherly treatment of their States by the Centre.

The statements that Mrs. Gandhi made, or attributed to her, during the Assembly elections after her return to power, that the States voting for her party would naturally qualify for better consideration were resented by the Opposition parties despite repeated denials by her. It is not surprising that in a federal polity the States continue to nurse grievances that they are not getting their due share of Central assistance for their development, no matter which parties are ruling them.

The current thinking in Delhi is that the Prime Minister can tackle the demand for a review of Centre-State relations in two ways, one by appointing a committee of experts to study the problem in all its aspects and suggest ways

of improving them, and the other by requesting the President to invoke Article 263 of the Constitution to establish an Inter-State Council to enquire into and advise on settlement of disputes not only between States but also between the Centre and the States.

There are several constitutional provisions spelling out the rights and responsibilities, the duties and obligations, of both the Centre and the States in their inter-relation in the country's federal polity, ranging from Articles 162 and 245 defining their legislative jurisdictions to Article 256 and 257 relating to the exercise of their executive powers and the issue of Central directions to States. The statutory provision under Article 280 for the appointment of a Finance Commission every five years, a unique feature of the Indian Constitution, takes care of the division of resources and the Centre's duty to cope with unforeseen contingencies arising from natural disasters and other such developments imposing unbearable burdens on the States.

The Centre is also entitled under Article 262 to intervene and adjudicate in inter-State disputes relating to the utilisation of water resources. It is also empowered under Article 307 to regulate Inter-State trade and commerce as well as movement of goods and persons. The proposed review would seek to widen the scope of the Centre's overall responsibilities in such spheres that have a bearing on national welfare without in any way restricting the legitimate rights of States.

But the real friction between the Centre and States has arisen over the arbitrary use of Article 356 to impose President's rule, often on purely political considerations. This power has been grossly misused not only by successive Congress governments but also by the Janata during its brief rule to set a bad precedent of the Centre summarily dismissing the State Governments run by other parties after a parliamentary elections. The Congress (I) did just the same thing after Mrs. Gandhi was voted back to power in 1980.

► **Pernicious practice:** The party in power at the Centre has been treating governorships as grace and favour appointments for rewarding political associates or accommodating those who could not be provided for in the Central Cabinet. The result is that Governors have often reduced themselves into personal nominees of those at the helm of the Central Government, not constitutional agents of the President exercising their powers with discretion.

Any review of Centre-State relations will inevitably involve a thorough re-examination of this pernicious practice which has undermined the spirit of the Constitution much more than any other action of the Central Government. It is not that Mrs. Gandhi alone is responsible for it, since Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. Charan Singh did not fare any better during their brief rule.

CSO: 4600/1743

APPOINTMENT OF RAJIV TO CONGRESS-I POST SCORED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 4 Feb 83 p 8

[Editorial]

[Text] Mr Rajiv Gandhi seems finally to have shed the last vestiges of his role as the reluctant debutante of Indian politics. It was never a wholly convincing part; but the present grace and favour appointment—without even the fig leaf of "popular" demand, leave alone respectable organizational elections—finally does away with the endearing mythology of a dashing young man persuaded against his own inclinations to abandon his first love to lend a hand to steering the ship of state. Mr Kamalapati Tripathi is too well schooled in the ruling party's discipline to admit how he feels about being foisted first with Mr C. M. Stephen and now with the Prime Minister's son; having reconciled himself to the anomalous position of Congress(I) "working president", he may even find it circumspect to believe, or at least pretend to do so, that the decision was his and that all general secretaries are equal. But it would be equally prudent to give up the pretence at the slightest hint

from the president or her latest nominee.

All this suggests that Mrs Gandhi has learnt nothing from her misfortunes in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Another explanation could be that the jolt of two major defeats and fears for her party's prospects in the Delhi elections have driven her to a form of defiance that cannot be justified by any mature evaluation of cause and consequence. But whatever the immediate provocation (and the return of four Sanjay Gandhi Vichar Manch legislators in Andhra Pradesh may also have been a contributory factor) Mrs Gandhi obviously remains faithful to what has been seen as her central aim since Sanjay Gandhi's death. Recent suggestions that she might turn in adversity to relics of the Congress old guard were obviously misleading; either Mr Guharratna Nanda and Mr D. P. Mishra descended uninvited on the capital like mourners at a wake or Mrs Gandhi thought it prudent to create a temporary

distraction by appearing to seek the wisdom of age and experience.

The latter seems more likely in view of all her other diversionary manoeuvres. The public was encouraged to believe that radical changes were afoot, and that the Government and party would emerge from the process with increased strength and enhanced credibility. Instead, we are left with the spectacle of men and women occupying high positions solely because they enjoy the Prime Minister's trust, and the uncomfortable suspicion that they do so primarily because they have no option but to fall in with all her wishes. Mr Rajiv Gandhi, of course, heads this list of political dependents. Not even his mother can expect him to galvanize the AICC(I) into vigorous action, but she presumably hopes that as general secretary he might thwart stirrings that could weaken her control and in the long run damage her fond ambitions for him.

CSO: 4600/1731

INDIA

INDIA CONSIDERS DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH MALAYSIA

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 8 Feb 83 p 8

[Text] Aboard INS Udayagiri, Feb 7 (PTI)--India and Malaysia may extend their cooperation to the field of equipment to meet Malaysia's defence needs.

This was indicated here today both by the visiting Chief of the Indian Naval Staff, Admiral O S Dawson and his Malaysian counterpart, Vice-Admiral Dato Mohammad Zain Sallet who held wide-ranging discussions during the last two days.

At present India provides training facilities to Malaysian navy personnel.

Admiral Dawson hosted a reception in honour of Admiral Zain last evening on board the Indian naval frigate, INS Udayagiri berthed at Port Klang, about 40 km from Kuala Lumpur.

While Admiral Dawson said that India was capable of meeting Malaysia's requirements of defence equipment, Admiral Zain disclosed that his country was considering the question of availing themselves of the facility.

In a chat with newsmen on board the vessel, Admiral Zain expressed admiration for India's achievements in the field of defence production. He noted that India was even building helicopters, like the one on the ship, which could carry an anti-submarine torpedo.

He said that Malaysia, being a small country, had to buy defence supplies from outside. They were not getting such supplies from the West. Malaysia would like friendly consideration from India in this respect, and certainly the price of equipment had to be competitive.

With a word of praise for India's general outlook, Admiral Zain said "India is our big brother, but there is no big brotherly attitude."

On the part of Malaysia, he said, there was no question of trying to balance India against anyone else in any defence purchases. "We believe in defending our country and the possibility of India meeting our defence needs naturally figures in our discussions," he remarked.

Admiral Dawson described his visit and discussions here as "very successful and fruitful."

He pointed out that "India is not expansionist and has no territorial ambitions. The role of the Indian Navy is only to defend the country's shores."

He extended an invitation to Admiral Zain to pay a visit to India. The Malaysian Navy Chief said he hoped to make the trip.

CSO: 4600/1744

INDO-AUSTRIAN PANEL TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Feb 83 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Feb. 4.

India and Austria will be setting up an Indo-Austrian mixed commission for promoting commercial and economic relations between the two countries under letters exchanged here today between Mr. Abid Hussain, Secretary, Union Commerce Ministry, and Dr. Georg Henning, Austrian Ambassador to India.

The Commission will identify the potential areas for closer commercial and economic cooperation between India and Austria including joint ventures in third countries and joint manufacturing, research and development and marketing programmes. It will also identify and decide upon the measures to promote such cooperation.

It will have representatives of Governments as co-chairmen and may include representatives of the chambers of commerce of the two countries and, if necessary, of representatives of firms of the two countries.

The commission may meet as often as necessary at the request of either, alternately in India and Austria. The work of the commission will be reviewed by the Ministers of Commerce of the two countries whenever required at suitable intervals.

The two-way trade between India and Austria has recently increased significantly although India's exports have not been able to keep pace with this increase. The total trade

turnover between the two countries in 1981-82 has been estimated at Rs. 38 crores.

However, there has been an increased interest in the Austrian market in Indian goods. Currently a purchase mission from Austria is in Madras to obtain leather and leatherwear. This mission will be coming to New Delhi to discuss other potential exports.

India's principal exports to Austria are textiles and clothing, tea, leather and leather goods, basic chemicals, floor coverings and engineering goods while the imports have been of machinery, iron and steel, synthetic fibres, viscose, rayon fibre, transport equipment and scientific instruments.

Export potential: Moreover, there appears to be a good market for sports goods, hand tools, engineering goods, auto ancillaries, electrical and household appliances, most of which are being imported by Austria from West Germany. There is also scope for exporting iron ore as Austria imports ore and scrap, gem and jewellery, marine products, basic chemicals and pharmaceuticals, plastic goods, hides and skins etc.

There is also the possibility for increase in exports to Austria of certain traditional Indian items like tobacco and jute goods apart from cotton textiles and clothing, which are subject to quota restrictions under the bilateral agreement.

CSO: 4600/1735

ANALYST EXAMINES CONTENTS OF INDO-PRC TALKS

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Feb 83 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Feb. 3.

The third round of Sino-Indian talks in Beijing has ended without any understanding on how the two countries should proceed to evolve a mutually acceptable basis for substantive discussions on the border question.

The two sides met only to agree to meet again, to keep the dialogue open for what it is worth, with no sign of any flexibility on China's part even on the procedural aspects of the problem.

However, an encouraging feature of this frustrating exercise is that neither country has tried to force the pace of the dialogue to the point of breaking it, in the absence of any progress during the three rounds of discussions. The two sides have been displaying, on the other hand, a shared interest in keeping the door open for more meaningful exchanges at some stage depending on other developments.

Strategies not spelt out: In going through the motions of reiterating their known approaches to the problem, both India and China have been taking the utmost care not to disclose even their negotiating strategies, let alone their fall-back positions, for arriving at an equitable settlement. The two sides have been striving hard to size up each other's attitudes before spelling out their ideas on how the dispute could be settled with matching concessions.

At one stage, the Chinese wanted to elevate the dialogue to a political level, but later on they changed their mind and started insisting on continuing the talks at the official level to prepare the ground for ministerial discussions. But they continue to remind India that a return visit by its External Affairs Minister is overdue, while suggesting that a goodwill visit by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, herself would be extremely helpful in setting the tone for reconciliation or stepping up the pace of normalisation.

Package offer not final: During the diplomatic consultations that preceded the third round, the Chinese officials dealing with

the border issue assured that in making the so-called package offer they had not adopted a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. It was stated that China would be prepared to consider any alternative suggestions that India might have in mind if the package approach was unacceptable to it.

But the Indian view has been that the package offer is no offer at all since first China's preference has been to set aside the border issue and proceed with normalisation in other spheres. If India felt that there could be no real normalisation of relations without a border settlement, China was prepared to resolve the dispute on the basis of the existing realities in all the three sectors as part of a package proposition.

The Indian officials pointed out to their Chinese counterparts that the first alternative clearly implied that the two sides should agree to perpetuate the status quo without a formal agreement. The second alternative meant that India should agree to the same and relinquish its rights to the territory under Chinese occupation in return for a Chinese abandonment of its cartographic claims to the territories south of the McMahon line.

Negotiations later: In declining to disclose at this stage its own terms for a settlement that took note of mutual interests, India has been insisting that the two sides agree first on the modalities for substantive discussions before commencing negotiations for a settlement. It does not feel called upon to reveal either its negotiating strategy or fall-back position until the procedural details have been settled to mutual satisfaction.

The Chinese are not prepared to go along with this approach, although they have not altogether rejected it. They have declined to discuss separately, even if simultaneously, the respective claims of the two sides in the three sectors even as a prelude to a package settlement. They have also refused to go back to the Colombo proposals to start off from the point where the talks were broken off in 1962.

Differences persist: At the latest round of talks in Beijing, the two delegations went round and round the mulberry bush covering the same ground all over again. The differences persisted with no sign of any flexibility from either side on these basic aspects of the problem.

It was quite evident that the talks had run into a dead end for all practical purposes from

the cancellation of the interview Mrs. Gandhi had agreed to give to the leader of the visiting Xinhua news agency team. She probably felt that this was not an opportune moment to disclose her thoughts on the border position, when the Indian and Chinese officials were unable to agree on even the procedural aspects of the proposed negotiations.

CSO: 4600/1732

ANALYST EXAMINES DETAILS OF DUTCH ASSISTANCE

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Feb 83 p 6

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] NEW DELHI, Feb. 4.

A new economic and technical cooperation agreement is to be signed on Tuesday between India and the Netherlands providing for increased Dutch assistance for the country's development programmes in some selective spheres.

The Netherlands Minister for Foreign Trade, Mr. F. Bolkestein, who is arriving on Monday on a four-day visit to India will sign the agreement on behalf of his Government.

He will be having discussions with, among others, the Ministers of Agriculture, Commerce, Finance, Civil Aviation, Defence, Petroleum and Shipping and Transport, besides representatives of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, to identify the areas for increased Indo-Dutch cooperation.

The total financial assistance provided by the Netherlands to India during 1979-82 amounted to Rs. 316.4 crores out of which nearly Rs. 110 crores were given as grant and the rest in the form of soft loans to finance fertilizer purchases. The Dutch aid programmes for India have provided both financial and technical assistance in the fields of agriculture and water development.

Rural aid: As the single largest recipient of this assistance, India has been able to utilise it for financing upto 30 per cent of the cost of rural drinking water supply schemes in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, besides a small-scale industrial project in Karnataka, in addition to using a part of this money for agricultural rural development credit. The whole purpose of the Dutch aid, which is relatively modest, is aimed at assisting India in its programmes for

improving rural living standards and encouraging increased self-reliance.

A simultaneous effort is being made to step up Indo-Dutch trade which is very nominal at present. The Indian exports to the Netherlands include agricultural products, foodstuffs, raw materials, textile fabrics and yarn. Apart from fertilizer, the Netherlands has been supplying India machinery and transport equipment, and steel, chemical and petroleum products.

An important feature of Dutch aid is that funds are also made available through private non-commercial organisations. The Netherlands organisation for International Development and Cooperation is a non-political foundation that has been set up by merging nearly 70 such private institutions to offer assistance to Third World countries on a well-coordinated basis for their development. The aid programmes of this organisation include offer of scholarships and books, and India's share of these fellowships was 41 during 1982.

The Dutch aid is more or less on the same pattern followed by some of the smaller European countries like Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland which with their limited contributions would like to ensure that the money is used in sectors where it is needed most and capable of promoting greater self-reliance.

These countries have been concentrating mostly on the rural sector, leaving the industrial field largely to the big powers with considerably larger resources. These aid programmes are designed to produce quicker results and also generate greater self-reliance by training local personnel to handle similar projects in other parts of the country without further foreign assistance.

CSO: 4600/1735

INDIA

MINISTER NOTES IMPROVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE, TRANSPORT

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 5 Feb 83 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 4.--Despite a setback due to drought and floods, there has been steady improvement in the infrastructural sectors of energy and transport and some progress in the main agricultural and industrial sectors.

This was stated by the Minister of Planning, Mr S. B. Chavan to members of the parliamentary consultative committee attached to his Ministry here yesterday.

The Minister said that the unfavourable monsoon had adversely affected the last kharif crop and efforts were being made to increase rabi production to the maximum extent possible.

Though agricultural production had recorded a sizable increase in 1980-81 and 1981-82, foodgrain output was below Sixth Plan targets. Efforts would have to be intensified in this sector during the remaining period of the Plan, if the target of 149 to 154 million tons was to be realized.

Mr Chavan said that efforts were to be made to bring larger areas under irrigation by creating additional potential and to improve further the utilization of the potential already created. The performance in the Command Area Development Projects would also need to be improved further, he added.

Commenting on irrigation, he said that there was a marginal shortfall in the first two years of the Plan due to shortage of materials like cement and coal and due to inadequate funds. Minor irrigation programmes were affected by power shortage and delay in energization. The outlay in the annual Plan during the current year would enable the addition of an irrigation potential of 2.35 million hectares.

CSO: 4600/1734

BRIEFS

NEW LEFTIST PARTY--Nagpur, February 3. The breakaway Communist Party of India (Bolsheviks) was formed here this week under the leadership of Dr. Shashikant Vaikar. Dr. Vaikar was expelled by the CPI in December last. He had given a call for "Nagpur bandh" without consulting the party executive. According to a statement issued by the new party, delegates from all over the Vidarbha region had attended the convention here last week, which took the decision to form the new party. It was held under the presidentship of a four-member "presidium" comprising Mr. Manohar Shende, Mr. Chanuji Chaure, Mr. Ramarayyan Singh and Mr. G. Prem. It adopted the "manifesto of communist revolutionaries." The party would be known as Communist Party of India (B). [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Feb 83 p 13]

AMBASSADOR TO NEPAL--Kathmandu, Feb. 4 (UNI)--Indian Ambassador to Nepal H C Sarin today presented his credentials to King Birendra at a special ceremony at the royal palace here. Presenting his letter of credence, Mr Sarin called for greater co-operation between the two countries in a number of fields, particularly in the management of joint river resources to their mutual benefit. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 5 Feb 83 p 7]

TRIPURA CABINET EXPANSION--Agartala, Feb. 8.--A new Minister was inducted into the Tripura Left Front Cabinet today. The Cabinet had now a strength of 13, the biggest-ever since Tripura attained Statehood in January 1971. The decision was officially announced here tonight. The opening session of the Assembly begins tomorrow. The Chief Minister met the Governor, Mr M. S. H. Burney here this evening. The new entrant, Mr Ramkumar Nath, a veteran CPI (M) MLA from the North District, will be sworn in on February 10. He will be given the portfolio of Food and Civil Supplies, now being held by the Chief Minister. Meanwhile, the Tripura Government has agreed to the Centre's proposal to take the help of the Army for providing security to vehicular traffic along the Assam-Agartala National Highway and other vital road-links in the State as a stop-gap arrangement. The Centre has asked the State authorities to rush the CRPF battalions deployed in Tripura to Assam. The Union Government wants the Army to assist the administration, particularly in maintaining security in the extremists-infested areas of Tripura until the CRPF personnel return here after completion of election duty in Assam. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 9 Feb 83 p 9]

CSO: 4600/1730/1738/1746

OPEC, NONALIGNED MEETINGS LEAVE MULLAHS CHASTENED

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 p 1

[Text] The Tehran regime stepped out on the international stage in the past week--and found it rough going. In Delhi the delegation to the nonaligned meet found its lack of experience of such gatherings left it out-manoeuvred from the start; while in London oil minister Mohammad Gharazi had found out by Thursday morning that there was enough fervour among the other oil ministers to leave him with no new gains in his efforts to impose Iran's ideas on them.

Tehran radio had been pretty subdued about both events after officials had built up an impression the week before that the Islamic republic was about to score great new victories over imperialism and to take the lead in the Third World. At Delhi it appeared that their delegates failed to realise the importance of committee work and lobbying at such gatherings and they proved unable to capture anyone's imagination. In addition it quickly became clear once things got moving that the rest of the Third World feels the bloodshed at the war front (and probably that inside Iran on the domestic front) is as serious a matter as the regional threat from the hostilities. Such concern for human life rather than purely strategic interests seemed a refreshingly new ingredient of such a meet.

With the prospect of a drastic fall in oil revenues if the OPEC ministers agreed a sizable cut in the price of oil (a drop of 5 dollars a barrel was being recommended following the London ministers meeting) the mullahs' concern over their future financing became obvious. If they cannot afford to continue the war, which now seems a distinct possibility, they must have sufficient funds available to both resettle the hundreds of thousands who have been spending their time at the front or in logistical work as well as provide a better life for the people in general if they are to survive.

Thus it was no surprise on Wednesday, as rumours that there were now definite signs Tehran was showing it might be amenable to negotiating if its situation were properly understood, that Iran's U.N. delegate let it be known that a cash deposit of 50 billion dollars could do the trick. This would be regarded as reparations to Iran. The nonaligned summit had heard a plan from the Persian Gulf states under which both sides would receive reparations but would be heavily penalised by international bodies if they failed to respond. The summit

was understood to be planning its own proposals and the setting up of a "high powered grouping" to exercise pressure on both sides to get it accepted. There was, some officials at the summit averred on Wednesday night, definite signs of a new receptivity to discussion in Tehran.

Earlier in the week, following warnings by officials that falling oil revenues could mean revision of the budget, President Ali Khamene'i and other top cabinet ministers met with Ayatollah Khomeyni to discuss the war situation. Although Khamene'i announced afterwards that the outcome of the struggle was not in doubt because Iran had not only the psychological but also material advantages in men and weapons it was widely assumed that the full implications of the situation had been discussed. It was widely felt details of a new strategy, with negotiations from an advantageous position the ultimate aim, had been the main subject of the meeting.

On the home front there came renewed warnings to the public to halt its un-Islamic behaviour in public. Prosecutor Lajevardi threatened that revolutionary guards would arrest offenders (he emphasised that women should wear veils) and take them to Evin prison.

CSO: 4600/451

RIFTS BETWEEN GUARDS LEADERS WIDENS

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 pp 2-3

[Text] Tehran observers say there appears to be a growing rift between the commander of the revolutionary guards Mohsen Reza'i and the minister for the revolutionary army Mohsen Rafiqdoost.

The main reason for their differences is said to be the new law on employment of guards and their salaries and benefits. The law has been drafted by Reza'i and two young mullahs from Montazeri's office in Qom who did not consult Rafiqdoost, who is supposed to represent the guards' interests at cabinet level.

Rafiqdoost enjoys the full support of President Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani and Interior Minister Mateq Nouri. But his personal influence among the rank and file of the guards is said to be almost non-existent.

On the other hand, Reza'i is fully supported by Montazeri and his henchmen such as "Ayatollah" Meshkini and Jannati. He also enjoys popularity among the mass of the guards, especially those in the front line.

In the draft law ample provision has been made for reward to guards who leave the comfort of big cities for service on dangerous missions, either on the front line or in various other field operations. This means that those revolutionary guards who serve in urban areas must make do with their salaries and no fringe benefits.

Reza'i has argued that service in cities is the religious duty of all able-bodied young men and women and that the salaries they receive simply represent a kind of remuneration to support their humble life-style. He says additional provision for those who serve in dangerous situations is also supposed to cover additional expenses. Rafiqdoost has argued in turn that the young revolutionary guards serving in Tehran and provincial towns are exposed to terrorist attacks and various other dangers.

Rafiqdoost said that no discrimination would be justifiable between guards in the cities and those serving on combat missions. This would be un-Islamic and could serve "American interests."

Observers say that at least in appearance, Rafiqdoost seems to be a great deal more anti-American than Reza'i. For instance, Rafiqdoost has insisted that such semi-heavy arms as small pieces of artillery, recoil-less guns and armoured vehicles should be bought from friendly countries such as India, North Korea and Yugoslavia and not from U.S-backed states like Turkey and Italy.

Rumours in Tehran suggest that Rafiqdoost, in partnership with Khamene'i and Rafsanjani, has set up an import-export corporation which is the sole purchaser of arms from India, North Korea and Yugoslavia. The same corporation has the sole rights to import video-tapes and colour TV sets.

Rafsanjani has never denied these rumours; he has simply said that he cannot concern himself with idle talk and gossip. But Sobh-e-Azadegan which is the official organ of the revolutionary guards and under Reza'i's influence, has suggested that profits from a trading company which finance partisan activities (of the Islamic Republican Party) may well be in keeping with Islamic tenets.

Observers see this suggestion by Sobh-e-Azadegan as a sly way to inform people that indeed such a corporation exists and that rumours are right in hinting that Rafiqdoost, Khamene'i and Rafsanjani are partners in corrupt deals.

According to observers it depends on the attitude of one mullah by the name of Hojatoleslam Fahim as to whether the struggle will end in favour of Rafiqdoost or Reza'i. Fahim whose first name has never been mentioned in the newspapers, is apparently Montazeri's representative in the revolutionary guards organisation. Recently he threw his weight behind Reza'i in a shake-up of the guards organisation in Kermanshah. As a result, several mob leaders who had accumulated enormous power in that city were quietly moved to positions in other cities.

Observers believe that Fahim, though seemingly a Montazeri appointee, is a shrewd mullah whose main interest is to maintain unity among the guards and enable this semi-official military force to remain as a buffer between the army and the seat of power in Tehran and Qom.

Recently, in an interview with ETTELAAT, Fahim said that rumours concerning plans to replace the regular army by the revolutionary guards were lies. He said each fighting unit had its own specific duties to carry out. He gave the impression that the army must fight foreign enemies and armed insurgencies, while the guards were to safeguard the revolution--that is, the regime.

The Chief of the Martyrs Organisation, a mullah by the name of Abbas Karroubi, is also said to play an important role in keeping the peace between Reza'i and Rafiqdoost. Karroubi, like Fahim, has not yet shown any predilection for either Rafiqdoost or Reza'i.

He too has said that the unity of guards must be preserved. His position is important since he dispenses funds to the families of guards who are killed in action or injured.

KURDISH GUERRILLAS STILL CONTROLLING COUNTRYSIDE

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 pp 3-4

[Text] In spite of the loss by the Kurdish guerrillas of the strategic border road between Piranshahr and Sardasht to government forces, the overall situation in Iranian Kurdistan has not changed, Mostafa Hejri, a member of the politburo of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, said in Paris this week.

The PeshMergas, the guerrillas, were fighting against not only the regular army but against a huge force of revolutionary guards, mobilisation organisation forces and Kurdish cooperators with the Khomeyni regime, who included the Barzani Kurds from Iraq, Hejri said. The government losses reflected the size of the operation, he added, claiming that the government forces had lost 6,197 dead and 8,272 wounded against 268 killed on the Kurdish side and 100 wounded.

These figures were for the four months since the government forces started their fierce offensive against the Kurds.

Hejri said that the heavy loss of life among the Kurdish population who had been driven from their villages had also to be taken into account. Thanks to the deliberate destruction of villages and homes at least 25,000 families had been forced to take refuge in the mountains, where they had to fight against fierce cold and shortage of food. The continued government blockade of the area was also causing hardship through lack of supplies.

He said the Kurds held 267 prisoners and had captured and destroyed many military vehicles and weapons, as well as shooting down 17 helicopters. He said body counts had been backed up by checks at hospitals and mortuaries in the cities to enable the KDPI to give such precise figures for casualties.

As an example of the big numbers of men who had had to be deployed by the Khomeyni regime in Kurdistan Hejri said there were no fewer than seven military posts along the 90 kilometre Piranshahr-Sardasht road, each manned by 60-100 men. Facing this was a regular force of 12,000 PeshMergas, plus 50,000 "heizebergeri", an armed civilian force which comes to the aid of the PeshMergas when they are under attack or helps in operations. Although the government forces controlled the cities and main roads by day that security was frail at night, and the PeshMergas controlled the countryside. In addition, on the day

of the elections to the Assembly of Experts the Kurdish guerrillas had taken control of a number of towns. They held Bukan and Saqqez for 12 hours, and Mahabad and a number of other places for 24 hours. The regime had announced polling in these areas had to be postponed because cold weather and other difficulties, but it was the fact that the towns were occupied that prevented voting, Hejri said.

Arbitrary executions continued, with a dozen people being shot in jails in Sanandaj and another town in one day recently. The brutal destruction of homes and villages of those suspected of harbouring the guerrillas had been carried out on a wide scale.

Although the Mojahedin-e Khalq was fighting in other parts of Iran the Mojahedin working with the Kurds were generally engaged in other activities like running a radio station and other political work. Hejri said he had no knowledge of any independent Mojahedin units fighting in Kurdistan, their activities there being fully aligned with the KDPI.

Questioned about the National Council of Resistance, to which the KDPI is affiliated, Hejri said his party believed the body would keep to its pledge to give democracy to Iran if it came to power. "We are fighting for democracy and that is a guarantee in itself", he declared. He also denied the "propaganda" that the KDPI was seeking independence for Kurdistan. "We seek autonomy within an integrated Iran", he said, "We are purely Iranian 100 per cent Iranian, and are against the idea of independence". The question of others in Turkey and Iraq was their own concern.

Hejri was asked about the KDPI's attitude to NCR member and former Islamic republic president Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, who has been accused of ordering offensives against the Kurds when he held office. Hejri admitted that Bani-Sadr had "done things against us" but he had later risen up against the reactionary regime of Khomeyni and joined up with the revolutionary forces. Now the Kurds recognised him as a true revolutionary.

Hejri also said that the KDPI had condemned the Iraqi invasion of Iran but since the Iranians had moved into Iraqi territory it seemed proper to condemn the Tehran regime, too. But he felt the regime needed the war too badly to keep the people occupied more than it did a peace. The war propaganda was designed to mislead the simple people.

CSO: 4600/451

PLEA MADE TO HELP CHILD PRISONERS IN IRAQ

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 pp 4-5

[Text] An Iranian woman, who gave her name as simply Mrs Irandokht, told IPS in an interview in Paris that she learned in a recent trip to Iraq that there could be up to 6,000 Iranians under the age of 18 in prison camps in Iran. She appealed to Iranians everywhere to write to the Red Cross and Iraqi authorities to try to ascertain the exact numbers and to do whatever they could to help the youngsters.

Khomeyni had contended that children who had been shown by the Iraqis as prisoners were not Iranians but Iraqis disguised as Iranians. But she found this was not true when she met 200 of them whose ages ranged between 12 and 18 years. Those she saw were in good health but professional Iranian soldiers she met at another camp told her that many others were sick or wounded.

Mrs Irandokht said the children told her they had been taken from school to the mobilisation organisation (Baseej) and from there they had been sent to the front after short military training and a month of "brainwashing". They were all from the lower classes, and their parents not only benefited from the service of their children with the forces but were also entitled to financial and other benefits if their sons were martyred.

Many refused to talk to her, saying there were Khomeyni "agents" among them. On one occasion one boy asked the guards if they would beat them if they talked freely to her. Some asked if they could be allowed to go to some other country but not Iran. The effects of the brainwashing could be seen from the fact that the boys often protested that they had been quite willing to become martyrs but it had not worked out that way and "it is not our fault."

Though sad, however, the youngsters were not demoralised. Mrs Irandokht said she felt the reason the Iranian government did not want them back at the moment was because they realised that many of them were disillusioned about the stories of the presence of the Missing Imam and Hazrat Zeinab at the battlefield, and if they returned home and spread this disillusionment it would cut the flow of youngsters to the mobilisation organisation.

Soldiers she talked to claimed that the revolutionary guards had roped many of the youngsters together to ensure less committed ones did not make off from the front. One told her hundreds of the youngsters had been killed. "They went onto the minefields when even the donkeys wouldn't go", she reported him as saying.

The regular troops also alleged that officers and men had been brought from prison to the front and had been left to face the Iraqis without proper arms. They had been mown down.

Mrs Irandokht, a biologist working in Lausanne and running her own independent women's group called Anahita, went to Iraq at the invitation of the president of the Iraqi women's federation. She said her talks with the prisoners had been in the presence of Persian-speaking Iraqi guards. On her return to Europe the French Socialist party-backed Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran, chaired by Claude Bourdet, sponsored a press conference for her.

She repeated her plea to Iranians to do what they could to help the children. She suggested an international committee could be set up to rescue and help them.

CSO: 4600/451

MUSAVI CLAIMS REGIME INHERITED \$176 BILLION IN DEBTS

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 p 5

[Text] Premier Mir Hossain Musavi told a rally at Karaj, 35 kilometres west of Tehran, that the Islamic republic has now begun a period of economic boom. He said the economy had defied the gloomy predictions of western economists. "When we ousted the monarchist regime on the eve of the revolution we inherited some 17 billion dollars in loans and financial obligations to the other countries from that regime," he said. "We began to pay these debts to the country's creditors despite the fact that these foreign loans were accumulated by the previous regime," he said.

"Today we have paid off all these debts; only a few dollars which belong to some obscure loan agreements are still outstanding".

Musavi said Iran had no loans to any country while her foreign exchange reserves were ample. In this regard Iran was in an enviable position. Many other countries had amassed huge foreign debts despite the fact that they had no war to finance and no costly revolution to pay for.

Observers were surprised by Musavi's reference to what he claimed to be 17 billion dollars in foreign loans accumulated by the former regime. Two weeks ago his central bank chief Mohsen Nourbakhsh had said that on the eve of the revolution Iran had 15 billion dollars in foreign loans.

According to reliable statistics at world financial organisations both figures are wrong. In fact, Iran had accumulated 15 billion dollars in foreign exchange reserves, including US Government Bonds and US treasury bills, by the time Shahpour Bakhtiar's government was toppled.

In addition Iran had foreign assets such as shares in major European companies, deposits at British and French central banks and claims on sale of oil on preferential terms to friendly developing countries. Against all these assets Iran's foreign exchange debts were estimated at 2.8 billion dollars on the eve of Khomeyni's take-over. This was the figure given by the minister of finance in Bazargan's cabinet.

CSO: 4600/451

NEW WARNING ISSUED ON UN-ISLAMIC DRESS

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 p 7

[Text] Premier Mir Hussain Musavi called on "misguided and unsophisticated individuals to avoid helping enemies of Islam and other counter-revolutionaries through "unnecessary exhibitionism and improper dress".

"Counter-revolution is trying to misinterpret the Imam's eight-point charter," Musavi said. "Enemies of Islam like to exhibit their animosity to us by fancy clothing and improper acts which they commit publicly."

Naive and misguided elements were imitating counter-revolutionaries by dressing up indecently in public, he said.

"Those who cannot fight us by bullets have now resorted to other means," Musavi said. "They publicly defy Islam's instructions and engage in unseemly actions and when confronted by revolutionary guards, they say the Imam's orders have given them permission to do so."

Earlier other mullahs had warned the people, especially women, that the regime's liberalisation plan did not mean that observance of Islamic formality could be abandoned.

However, Musavi's remarks clearly shows that people are showing their opposition to the regime by following fashion. Reports from Tehran also indicate that many people now write letters to government departments quoting parts of Khomeyni's eight-point charter and pointing out instances of authorities ignoring those orders.

A common complaint is about mosque loudspeakers. Almost all mosques have received many letters from the public asking them to lower the volume of their loudspeakers.

CSO: 4600/451

IRANDIN CALLS TUDEH LEADERS' ARREST 'TRICK'

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 pp 7-8

[Text] Irandin, an ultra-nationalist clandestine opposition group inside Iran, has condemned the arrest of the Tudeh Party leaders as a Khomeyni-style trick to deceive western countries and divert the attention of Iranian public from more basic problems at home.

"The Tudeh Party has been a Soviet espionage arm from its very inception," Irandin claims in a statement released in Tehran recently. "How come it is only now that the mullahs have woken up to this reality and arrested the party's leaders?

"Tudeh's association with the Red Army and the Soviet Government has always been as clear as the sun," the statement says. "During Iran's military occupation we all were witness to how the Tudeh members used to stage demonstrations under the open protection of the occupying Red Army troops. Tudeh newspapers were openly asking the then Iranian authorities to concede concessions to the Soviet Union, such as oil exploitation rights in the north. There is a heap of evidence to prove that the Tudeh was an obedient servant of the Soviet Union.

"Even after the collapse of the Mossadegh government and the strengthening of Iran's defences against the Soviet covert penetration the Tudeh was able to survive by the mass flight of its leaders to Eastern Europe. It was from there that after the collapse of the Bakhtiar government, the Tudeh leaders and active cadres arrived in Iran and set up offices and newspapers."

Irandin claims that the mullahs knew the real identity of the Tudeh Party. It was the Tudeh which directed the mass arrest of the army officers, annihilation of the army and total destruction of the economy. The Tudeh leaders, including Ehsan Tabari, helped the mullahs to draft their so-called Islamic constitution.

"We must also say that it was the Tudeh association with KGB which enabled the mullahs to discover so-called plots against the Islamic regime," it says. "The KGB was able to infiltrate the ranks of patriotic groups, to spy on them, to learn about their plans and to pass on the information to the mullahs through the good offices of the Tudeh Party and this was a fact of which the mullahs were well aware."

Sources inside Iran, meanwhile, told IPS that the arrest of the Tudeh leaders and Moscow's open support for these leaders had once again demonstrated to Iranians the very close association existing between the two. Some Iranians openly remark that the way Moscow has come to the defence of the Tudeh leaders is in itself an undeniable evidence of Tudeh being nothing more than a Soviet instrument.

CSO: 4600/451

DETAILS OF ISSUING ID CARDS TO AFGHAN REFUGEES ANNOUNCED

Tehran KEYHAN AIRMAIL EDITION in Persian 9 Mar 83 p 6

[Interview with 'Abbas Akhundi, political deputy of the Ministry of the Interior, and Naser Arastu, chief of the Department of Alien Affairs of the country; place not specified]

[Text] Tuesday, 1 March

'Abbas Akhundi, political deputy of the Ministry of the Interior, and Naser Arastu, chief of the Department of Alien Affairs, explained in a press conference the various issues concerning the Afghans residing in the country.

First, 'Abbas Akhundi, the political deputy of the Ministry of the Interior, said:

After the occupation of Afghanistan by the occupying Soviet forces, many Afghans fled to the Islamic Republic of Iran for asylum. Even with the numerous difficulties which it faced, the government of the Islamic Republic, in sympathy with the Afghans and in order to enable the oppressed to retrieve their rights, treated them well, accepting all of them with open arms. But, the presence of more than 1.5 million Afghans in our country has created problems which must be resolved. Hence, the National Security Council approved the formation of a council called the council for the coordination of the affairs of the Afghan refugees, which was established more than 10 months ago and has carried out certain activities.

Continuing his statements, he added: Anyone living in a country has legal, judicial and political problems. And the Afghans are in such a position. Taking into consideration the fact that the Afghans have not entered the country through official channels, they must necessarily first be identified and receive identity cards. For this reason, in order to make preparations, in order to know the number of Afghans, and in order to understand their

problems, we have found it necessary to issue identity cards for them. The necessary plan has been completed and will be implemented throughout the country beginning 11 March 1983.

The identity cards will contain personal data concerning the card holder, including fingerprints and their address in Iran. Their stay can also be controlled with regard to the social and judicial concerns of the Afghans residing in Iran, he said.

In order to study these problems, a seminar will be held in the Ministry of the Interior beginning 1 March 1983 to examine these issues.

Naser Arastu, chief of the Department of Alien Affairs, said in this regard:

The presence of more than 1.5 million Afghan refugees has been problematic for our people.

Continuing his statements, referring to the political problems, he explained how the government is dealing with these problems.

Sometimes the people have reacted individually to the problems which have been created for them. He added:

Considering the policy of the Islamic Republic, which supports the deprived and the oppressed, certain hands have been at work magnifying the corruption of the Afghans in order to initiate a confrontation with the Islamic Republic. Hence, since the planning has been completed, it is appropriate that the issue be discussed in more detail with the people. Plans have been made in this area and the government has considered how to this problem should be resolved. For this reason, our first step is to identify the Afghans by issuing identity cards for them. In the seminar, more details will be discussed which will be put at the disposal of the people at the end of the seminar.

Akhundi's Explanations

Then, 'Abbas Akhundi continued: From now on, the Afghans entering the country will be controlled and taken to the camps. After being identified, they will be sent to the appropriate areas.

Concerning the judicial problems and criminal cases which occur, he said: Of course, an atmosphere has been fabricated in order to magnify the Afghan offenses. Since there have been problems in this area, they will be studied in this seminar and with the coordination of the judicial branch, the commission of such offenses by the Afghans will be prevented.

The Work Situation of the Afghans

A question was asked concerning the cheap Afghan labor in the job market and the unemployment of Iranian workers. 'Abbas Akhundi responded:

This is a problem which exists in our country. Everyone who wants cheap labor goes to the Afghans. Hence, our plan is that, firstly, after the cards are issued, no Afghan who does not have a card will be allowed to work and the workshops must not employ them. Secondly, their employment must follow certain regulations which the Ministry of Labor is devising.

Also, concerning the exit of currency of the Afghans, he said that the exit of the currency of the Afghans will be limited and those with identity cards will be allowed to send out 50 percent of their wages.

Also, concerning the political activities of the Afghans, he said:

Once they realize and understand that they are not dependent on the Eastern or Western superpowers, they can continue their political activities within the framework of the regulations and with regard for the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic.

Responding to the question concerning the regulations for the Afghans' demonstrations on various occasions and the protests of the Soviet Union in this regard, he said:

The mere protest of the Soviet government is irrelevant, because a nation has been oppressed and the people are protesting. In our country, they have been given the right to display their objections. But, if they want to attack the Soviet Embassy, this is not acceptable. At the time that this happened and they were unable to enter the embassy, this action was condemned. Their demonstrations must be totally within the framework of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic.

10,000
CSO: 4640/160

CALL ISSUED TO ARTISTS ABROAD TO PROTEST

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 p 8

[Text] The Association of Iranian Civil Servants, a clandestine opposition group in Iran, has called on Iranian musicians and other artists living abroad to make representations to the United Nations Cultural and Educational Organisation (UNESCO) to expel the Islamic republic from that organisation.

"As long as the Khomeyni regime remains in power and has de facto rule in Iran, it is necessary to deny any participation by that regime's envoys in the UNESCO offices," the association has said in a letter to its members abroad.

"Khomeyni has publicly declared that music is forbidden in his regime unless it is employed to encourage individuals to wage war," the letter said. "Authorities of the Islamic republic have put musicians and all artists out of work and subjected them to all kinds of humiliation.

"Gangs of hezbollahis in Isfahan and Yazd are known to have murdered poor entertainers and street musicians on charges of being corrupt on earth. Ordinary music has been banned on radio and television; only songs in praise of the killer Khomeyni and for purposes of warmongering are allowed."

The letter claims that there is a mass of evidence concerning the Islamic regime's ban on music and its inhuman treatment of musicians. The letter wonders why in the face of such evidence those Iranian musicians who live abroad have not yet done anything to ban Iran's present regime from membership of the UNESCO. It also blames the exile opposition groups for inaction on this point.

The letter also blames United Nations and UNESCO member countries for too much preoccupation with politics and no regard for honesty. "All they can do is to single out Israel and South Africa for their bigotry but turn a blind eye to the inhuman policies of such Third World countries as Iran under Khomeyni," it says.

CSO: 4600/451

REDUCED OIL INCOME THREATENS BUDGET

London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 pp 5-6

[Text] Interior minister Nateq Nouri has told a gathering in Shiraz that the coming year's budget was drafted with oil prices at their peak and budget figures may have to be cut.

"Falling price of oil means less income," he said. "So we must tighten our belts. We have far too many poor people. We inherited a poor country and no matter how fast we develop the economy we will still have poverty-stricken areas."

Nateq Nouri was the first cabinet minister to publicly admit that the falling prices of oil might force the government of Mir Hossain Musavi to revise the budget figures.

In a final analysis Musavi expected an income of some 25 billion dollars from oil exports. His oil minister Mohamad Gharazi had earlier said that Iran could well export 2.5 million barrels of crude a day at 32 dollars a barrel. This was a price which could make Iran's oil competitive with the Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian oil, he said.

The mullahs have already condemned recent developments in the world oil markets as an American plot to weaken OPEC and undermine the position of Iran's Islamic revolution.

They have not so far specified, however, what Iran would do to make up for the loss of revenue due to falling prices of crude oil.

It is generally known that the mullahs have been selling crude at very low prices. In some cases they have sold oil at 27 dollars a barrel. They even sold crude at 29.40 dollars a barrel to the United States Defence Department last year.

CSO: 4600/451

BRIEFS

AID TO 'SICK' INDUSTRIES--Industry minister Mehdi Hashemi has told the Tehran daily KAYHAN government wants private investment in ailing firms, not successful ones. "When we told people that some government-owned factories would be available for sale to them, our intention was to inject private money and talent into industry," Hashemi said. "However, what happened was that the people with money rushed to buy all money-spinning factories," he said. "Everybody wants to buy those factories which are making money and have no problems, but nobody wants to buy the moneylosing ones." The real challenge was for people to buy ailing factories. "To manage a good factory is no challenge," he declared. Hashemi said shoe factories, vegetable oil plants and factories making automobile parts were all in good condition. Some sugar and cement mills were also working well. "But we have problems with a number of other sugar mills, textile plants and factories producing construction materials," he said. "We would like private sector participation in these factories." [Text] [London IRAN PRESS SERVICE in English No 112, 10 Mar 83 p 7]

CSO: 4600/451

NDP LEADER CRITICIZES GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS

Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 83 p 7

[Text] PESHAWAR, March 21: The defunct NDP General Secretary, Al-Haj Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, has alleged that the Government was using cheap tactics to stop the NDP and other opposition parties from contacting the masses.

Addressing a meeting at Dera Ismail Khan, Mr Bilour referred to the ban imposed on him and other defunct NDP leaders who wanted to address a public meeting to pay homage to the late Maulana Mufti Mahmood the other day. "Stopping the people from paying homage to a great patriot who had been fighting against despotism all his life and who made sacrifices for freedom and in the service of the nation amounted to disservice to the nation", he said.

He demanded release of Mufti Mahmood's son, Maulana Fazalur Rehman and other political leaders.

The University of Peshawar has declared zero percent result of M.Sc Mathematics final examination perhaps for the first time in its history.

In all 15 students appeared in the examination but none of them secured pass marks.

In M.Sc First Year Mathematics 20 candidates appeared for the examination out of whom only one has been declared successful.

Thus the pass percentage in the first year is also just five p.c.

Mr. Azam Khan Afridi, President of Peshawar University Students Union, has urged the Government to remove the anomalies in the admission procedure in Peshawar University.

CSO: 4600/478

WORLD BANK OFFICIAL DISCUSSES UPLIFT PLANS

Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 83 p 8

[Text]

LAHORE, March 21: The Federal Food and Agriculture Minister, Vice-Admiral Muhammad Fazal Janjua, held in-depth discussions with Mr David Hopper, Vice-President of the World Bank for South Asia Region, at a high-level meeting here on Sunday to seek World Bank assistance for the implementation of a number of vital project proposals for the future development of agricultural sector in the country.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Punjab Agriculture Minister, Brig. (Retd) Ghazanfar Muhammad Khan, Federal Food and Agriculture Secretary and Chairman, Planning and Development Board, Punjab.

The Federal Minister particularly highlighted in detail the priority areas of raising intensity of existing cropping pattern, which also took into account the enrichment of soil, improving drainage system, provision of latest equipment for digging drains and desilting of irrigation channels, speeding up programme of pucca lining of 80,000 water courses, extension of training and visit programme to the majority of remaining districts in Punjab, Establishment of agro-service centres in the private sector to enable the small farmers to benefit from modern farm technology, setting up manufacturing plants of pesticides within the country, soil and water conservation in barani areas, establishment of Arid Zone Research Institute in Baluchistan.

promotion of social forestry and milk cooperative and establishment of international water management centre in Pakistan, with the assistance of World Bank to boost agriculture research in the vital areas of water management and drainage.

The problems that had cropped up during the implementation of on-going World Bank-aided projects also came under discussion in the meeting.

While giving his comments, Mr David Hopper stated that the World Bank would be delighted to be associated in the execution of any technically sound and economically viable project for bringing benefits to the common man. He stressed the need for formulating an over-all perspective plan for the entire Indus irrigation network for satisfactorily resolving the chronic problems of water management and drainage.

Any single project in the farming sector should form a part of this perspective plan, he added.

He made a special mention of stepping up applied research activities at the Agriculture University, Faisalabad, for raising agricultural productivity of the farming community. He expressed his satisfaction over the good results achieved in execution of on-going World Bank-assisted projects and praised the Punjab farmers for achieving spectacular results in boosting crops production.

Earlier, Mr David Hopper held a separate meeting with the Chairman, Planning and Development Board, Punjab, which was also attended by the concerned

provincial secretaries. Views were exchanged on a number of important subjects, such as, making arrangements for the supervision of primary schools, increasing number of trained teachers as well as science teachers and ensuring greater number of properly skilled workers in the province.—APP.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PRESENT, FORMER REGIMES SERVE AS WARNING

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 13 Feb 83 p 10

[Article by Mian Abdul Rashid: "The Warning Bells Are Ringing! Why and for How Long Will the Pastime of Making and Destroying Be Indulged"]

[Text] Children are in the habit of making things with great care and diligence and then destroying them a little later. We also destroy things every 5 or 7 years and nullify whatever progress we have made in agriculture and industry. We destroy with our own hands what we have created.

While playing together, children suddenly start quarreling among themselves and soon start to curse and hit each other. Every few years, we also start fighting; sometimes the political parties fight among themselves and at other times the administration and the people square off against each other.

When one among a group of children finds something, he refuses to share it with the others and starts running; the others chase him and a tug of war ensues resulting in tattered clothes and bloodied faces. Often the article they are fighting over either gets broken or falls into the hands of a third party. Whoever gains control of the reins of government in this country refuses to relinquish them, and starts running ahead with the others in full cry behind him. In the ensuing struggle, the game is lost to a new protagonist.

Children are gullible, because of which their elders can easily influence them and instigate them against each other. Our people, especially the students, easily fall under the influence of others, even foreign agents and take to the streets. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, political leaders become puppets in the hands of other countries for the sake of gaining power, and either for ulterior motives or out of foolishness get the people to take to the streets.

This drama is played every 5 to 7 years; one could even say that this tragedy has become a part of our national life. The question is, how long will our "national childhood" last? When will we attain maturity on the national level? How long will we continue this pastime of setting fire to our house to please others while we ourselves watch the destruction? Since it seems that such conditions are again being created, this should be a suitable time to pause and, with a cool head and heart, review carefully the past and present situations.

During Ayub Khan's term of office, the country made appreciable progress in agriculture and industry. Undoubtedly, that was a period of progress and prosperity. In 1962, during the Indo-Chinese war, Ayub refrained from taking Kashmir because he was assured by the United States that it would bring about a settlement of our dispute with India over Kashmir. India later reneged and the United States remained silent. Before that, we were assured that the Kashmir problem would be settled when the treaty dividing river waters was signed with India. But once Pandit Nehru obtained Ayub Khan's signature on the agreement over water, he refused to talk about Kashmir. America still said nothing. After these two incidents, Ayub Khan's faith in the United States was shaken and he began efforts to free himself from America's stronghold. Hence, on the one hand he drew closer to Iran and Turkey, and on the other hand, he improved relations with China, which displeased the United States. The 1965 Indian attack on Pakistan was aimed at punishing Ayub Khan. But Ayub Khan exhorted the nation to take to the battlefield reciting their faith in God and His prophet, and God granted us victory. Ayub Khan then shut down the U.S. air base from which U-2 planes took off to spy over Russia. Ayub Khan tried to improve relations with Russia in Tashkent; later, because of the Tashkent agreement, a nationwide movement was started against Ayub Khan, which finally resulted in an alcoholic adulterer coming into office, to be succeeded by an unprincipled adventurer who was willing to pay any price for power. The country was divided into two pieces, which profited neither the politicians nor the people.

International forces start conspiracies that succeed only because of the mistakes of the rulers and the leaders. Ayub Khan loved his country and he was a sensible man; now he is answerable only to his Maker. Our purpose in analyzing his mistakes is to enable us all, rulers as well as people, to learn from them and prevent the country from being confronted with similar situations.

Ayub Khan's greatest weakness was that he neither paid heed to anyone nor tolerated any criticism of his government. Another fault he later developed was to become susceptible to flattery. The third shortcoming that became apparent later was that Ayub Khan was surrounded by enemy agents in the form of ministers, advisors and secretaries who gave him erroneous advice and made him adopt wrong decisions; and they kept him ignorant of the people's affairs and feelings.

Ayub Khan was kept from taking the people into his confidence regarding the Tashkent agreement, even though he wanted to do so. He was prevailed upon to appoint Yahyah Khan rather than General Sarfaraz as the commander in chief, even though he preferred the latter. He was beguiled with dreams of world leadership and became so enamored with the idea of becoming the de Gaulle of Asia and an international leader that he neglected the country's law and order. Murder, robbery, cruelty and oppression increased, creating a sense of insecurity among the people. Khawja Nazimuddin said in September 1964 that he had definite proof of a conspiracy to divide the country into two parts; nevertheless, the country was split and conditions worsened. Ayub Khan agreed to a political solution but only when it was too late; by then conditions had deteriorated beyond redemption. If he had done the same things a few months

earlier, the situation might not have become so bad and the country might even have been saved from division. Perhaps if he had acted quickly and severely to punish the individuals involved in the Agartala conspiracy, none of the succeeding events would have occurred.

The same kind of conditions seem to be taking shape. We are refusing bases to the United States and are trying to improve relations with Russia in order to bring about a political solution of the Afghanistan problem. Gen Ziaul Haq has become a world leader and spends most of his time meeting prominent international personalities and solving world problems. Oppression, abduction, murder and robbery are increasing in the country; buses and railways are being looted without fear; the honor and dignity of the people are no longer safe even in their own homes. The administration does absolutely nothing, since it considers these incidents ordinary problems of law and order. Whenever meetings are held to discuss law and order, it is announced that the situation has been found to be satisfactory. The law is used to harass the people, and government officials cannot even conceive of the possibility that the law might be used to protect the rights of the people. One reads in history books that a dichotomy of action sometimes appears in countries; but here, a trichotomy has developed because of martial law, the limitations ordinance and the normal laws, creating complete confusion in law and order. Procrastination is the rule in every matter; decisions are not made in time and when a decision is finally reached, it is not carried out fully, resulting in a diminution of the dignity and power of the law.

In the past, President Zia used to speak with humility of the transient nature of power, saying that he would not remain the chief of state forever. Nowadays, he says, I will not relinquish power and you cannot remove me. I hold the assemblies and the ministries in my hand. Two years ago, when the situation on our borders was very dangerous with the fear of Russian incursion on the one side and of Indian attack on the other, the president steered a cautious course. He refrained from using harsh words against anyone, saying that, on the contrary, there was no danger from India and that our relations with Russia were good. At the same time, he remained adamant in his insistence that Afghanistan's position as a free and nonaligned country should be restored and that foreign forces should be withdrawn from that country and suitable conditions created for the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland. But during his recent visit to the United States, President Zia used harsh language against both the United States and Russia. This is not a change that can be contemplated positively.

One of the strategies of warfare is to keep the enemy guessing; that may be why military governments, regarding the people as their enemies, consider it good military strategy to keep them confused. But the people are the friends, not the enemies, of the government and it should take them into its confidence and encourage them to trust it and cooperate with it fully. Nowadays, the government sometimes says that elections will be held, sometimes that they will not be held; that it will make an important announcement, that it will not make such an announcement; that governors will be changed, that they will not be changed; that new ministries will be formed, they will not be formed; that F-16 planes are equipped with all kinds of weapons and that arms will be

arriving; that a new political structure will be announced on 14 August, that such an announcement will not be made. If the president's statements and announcements can no longer be believed, what is left? If an ordinary person loses credibility, he loses the ability to act; how much more important is the office of the head of the government.

President Zia's Islamic government is gradually adopting the ways and attitudes of the former governments. Long processions of cars; keeping school children waiting 4 hours at a time at roadsides so that they may shout long live; elaborate parties costing hundreds of thousands of rupees each; a plethora of foreign debts; inflation within the country and rising taxes. If the minister of finance and the chairman of the planning commission are such expert economists, why do not they prepare a budget for a household of five children whose head earns less than 1,000 rupees?

The alarm is sounding and warning us all, and that includes the people, the political leaders, the head of government and his friends. The people bear the smallest share of the responsibility because they are helpless. The responsibility of political leaders is greater, but the greatest responsibility of all is that of President Zia, who holds the key to the situation in his hand. He should abandon his policy of vacillation and become forthright in making decisions, which he should immediately put into action. He should restore law and order; take the people into his confidence; make fewer promises; and accomplish what he promises. Of course, he should maintain his status in the international sphere but he should pay attention to domestic affairs too. He should abandon the plan of giving the army a "constitutional right" to intervene in politics on a permanent basis. He should establish a government of good politicians and entrust to them the responsibility for holding elections. But the age limit for voting should be raised to 30 and only those who observe the rules of prayer and fasting should be allowed to vote. Both the voters and the candidates would then have to observe the rules. Giving unrestricted franchise to every adult would make the elections harmful rather than beneficial. Time passes at a swift pace and waits for no man. Once the water has passed under the bridge, it will be too late for anything but regret.

9863
CSO: 4656/112

JAMAAT-E ISLAMI'S VIEWS ON CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION HAILED

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 15 Feb 83 p 5

[Editorial: "Jamaat's Statement of Analysis and Invitation to Unity"]

[Text] The defunct Jamaat-e Islami party's central advisory council has stated in one of its resolutions that those in charge of leading the nation are incapable of giving the country even an ordinary clean and able administration, let alone fulfilling their promise of establishing an Islamic system. Such is the inefficiency of these people that no practical effects have been seen so far of the Islamic laws the promulgation of which was announced with such fanfare. Officials who run the administration make fun of Islamic laws and there is no one to silence them. Establishing an Islamic system of government in the country is, after all, a long-range goal; the present government, however, has not been able, in its lengthy term of office, to protect the lives, property and honor of the ordinary citizens and provide them with the rule of law. It appears that certain individuals within the government are determined, for certain motives of their own, to worsen the situation. The people in power, meanwhile, continue their attitude of neglect, dreaming their dream of "all is well." On the other hand, many religious and political leaders are busy exacerbating differences, slinging mud at each other and rousing religious, political, class and regional prejudices.

The defunct Jamaat-e Islami's resolution presents a correct and honest analysis of the national situation. The fact is that those who hold power, as well as the politicians, have equally disappointed the people, and the continuation of this situation increases restlessness and anxiety, and lack of confidence is increasing at an alarming rate. The president, who lacks a political power base, namely, a party, is determined to launch upon the venture of Islamization by means of a bureaucracy that was founded on a secular basis and is corrupt by secular standards. The administration by means of which the president is conducting the experiment of establishing Islam is not ready in principle, ideology or feeling to accept Islam in its true spirit. Those in the administration who have some intellectual attachment to Islam have the same attitude as that of Western Orientalists who recognize the virtues of Islam but want complete freedom to make alterations in it according to their own views and the standards of the time. These individuals consider established religious institutions and attitudes regarding the interpretation and explanations of religious matters outmoded. Hence, what these "devoted" friends of the administration are doing contains a strong element of the proverbial case of the

householders bringing down their own house. Their efforts are reminiscent of the story about milking the goat and ruining the milk at the same time. In addition to these devoted friends, the administration is composed mostly of employees who cannot be considered sincere, honest or capable even by secular standards of morality. These individuals are not only mentally out of step with the entire concept of Islamization, but in their feelings and actions they rebel against it and would like to see it totally destroyed. They want to see the experiment fail so completely that there will be nothing left to do for those who take the task seriously.

These are the individuals who, although they are part of the administrative machinery, openly express their enmity toward Islam and by their policies are determined to turn Islamization into a bad joke. Those now in power do not intend to rein in these individuals, and perhaps they do not even realize fully the harm these active groups in the government machinery are inflicting. Hence, the resolution of the Jamaat-e Islami is correct in stating that people in the administrative machinery make fun of Islamic laws and no one stops them from doing so. Certain individuals within the official ranks are intent on worsening the situation in order to achieve their own particular aims. But in spite of all this, the people in power continue to give no heed to the situation.

The situation demands that well-wishers of religion take heed, prepare themselves and become active so as to confront the possible consequences of the situation. Unfortunately, the members of the religious class, namely, the religious scholars and reformers, are busy fighting among themselves, unaware of the delicate situation and its serious consequences. Instead of grasping with all their strength the rope of God and adopting the course of unity, they have chosen the way of dissension. The politicians seem to be engaged in a contest of insult hurling and are arousing and voicing all kinds of prejudices, hatreds and grievances. Love, brotherhood and good human relations are on the decline. Certain politicians are openly playing the part of foreign agents.

In its analysis, the Jamaat-e Islami party has correctly notified those who are sincere and enlightened that it is a national and religious crime to stand as silent spectators to this situation. The only way to save ourselves from the dangerous conditions facing us is for the nation to unite on the basis of Islam. All those national forces who support the Islamic system and the ideology of Pakistan should adopt the course of unity and cooperation. Jamaat-e Islami has suggested seven points as a possible basis for this unity. Love of religion demands that all religion-loving forces give serious consideration to this appeal for unity and get together to devise a plan of action. We ask Jamiatul Ulema-e Islam, Jamiatul Ulema-e Pakistan and all parties, organizations and forces that love religion to pay attention to the necessity for this course of action.

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CSO: 4656/117

MINISTER CLAIMS NO POLITICAL PRISONERS

Karachi DAWN in English 9 Mar 83 p 4

[Excerpt]

FAISALABAD, March 8: There are no political prisoners in the country at present while only eight or nine persons have been kept in detention on charges of infringement of different laws. As such they cannot be styled as political prisoners.

This was disclosed here today by Federal Interior Minister, Mr. Mahmoud A. Haroon, in an interview with this correspondent. He further stated that between 600 to 650 persons had been kept in different jails on account of their involvement in subversive and disruptive activities whose challans have been partly framed. Their cases are under trial before different military courts.

In reply to a question about Mitha Police Commission report the Interior Minister said although the report was outdated its implementation was imperative and desirable.

In reply to another question, he said, all the jails which were located in thickly populated areas shall be shifted from there to more spacious areas in the suburbs.

CSO: 4600/448

PAKISTAN

GOVERNMENT WARNED OVER PUBLIC REACTION TO WOMEN'S PROTEST

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 18 Feb 83 p 5

[Editorial: "The Government Will Be Responsible"]

[Text] The recent protests by women in Lahore against the witness law based on the Koranic text and the police baton charge against the protesting women constituted two incidents of sacrilege. First, the protest of Westernized women against a Koranic principle was an act of irreverence toward the Koran and God's faith. Second, the police baton charge on the protesting women injured the dignity of womanhood. Out of these two incidents of sacrilege, the government was quick to take official notice of the less serious one; the minister of the interior announced that the incident would be investigated and an investigation was begun. But the sacrilege against the Koran was completely overlooked by the government. This attitude of tolerance and forgiveness toward those rebelling against religion was adopted by a government that claims to uphold the banner of Islam.

The entire country is protesting the demonstrations by a handful of women. The newspapers are full of statements of protest. A gathering of thousands of women in Karachi was told that a protest against God's law, made by a handful of women claiming to represent all the women of Pakistan, was an attempt to besmirch the name of the daughters of Islam and that action should be taken against these women protesters. After this gathering of women in Karachi, those women who claim to represent 50 percent of the population of Pakistan should be asked if these women who called the attitude of protesting women a betrayal do not qualify as women? If these women are all willing to accept the Koran's decision and consider it their duty to do so as servants of God, then which 50 percent of the women do the protesters represent?

In view of the large-scale protests all over the country against these wrong-headed women, we demand that the government take action against them as well. If it does not do so, and these women again commit such actions in the future, the millions of sons and daughters of Islam in Pakistan will deal with these apostate women in their own way, and the government will be responsible for any unpleasant consequences for having criminally ignored the sacrilege against the Koran.

9863

CSO: 4656/118

SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS WOMEN'S POSITION

Karachi DAWN in English 9 Mar 83 p 4

[Text] Participants of the International Women's Day seminar yesterday expressed concern over the proposed "Law of Evidence" and felt that it tantamounts to reducing women to the status of "second class citizens."

Speakers at the seminar, organised by the Women's Action Forum at Karachi Press Club, highlighted the repercussions of the proposed amendments on the overall efforts for the emancipation of women in Pakistan.

The symposium was presided over by Mrs Sultana Siddiqi.

Speaking on the occasion, prominent lawyer, Mr Khalid M. Ishaq, called upon the women to fight for their rights on the intellectual plane. He invited them to form a special sub-committee to formulate their point of view and prepare a brief for examination by legal bodies, including the Shariah Court.

He offered his services along with "friends from the bar" to help women fight their legal case with reference to their status in Islam (in particular the Law of Evidence).

He pointed out that there are many laws in the offing which if not checked at the draft stage, will be "disastrous" in future.

He offered to provide women lawyers the necessary legal expertise and suggestions to block the passing of such laws which could be harmful to the society in the future.

There is no ban on speaking the truth, he said, and called upon the women to present their case prop-

erly to press those in authority to revise their views. "Know your place and act on time and success will be yours," he observed.

Mr Khalid Ishaq whose knowledge and skill in Islamic jurisprudence is respected in the legal profession said, where the Holy Quran is silent interpretations provided the guidance in the matter. Besides, he said, the instrument of "Ijtehad" is also available.

He strongly advocated that all controversial matters should be brought before the Federal Shariah Court for interpretation.

Mrs Shahida Jamil explained the salient features of the "Law of Evidence" and cited examples to illustrate her point of view.

Miss Anita Ghulam Ali spoke about the injustices done to the women folk and cited examples from over 180 textbooks in which females were subjected to ridicule in about 3,800 characters presented in these books.

She pointed out that in these characters, used in various textbooks, women were presented to have been engaged in lower class occupations. She regretted that there was no mention of the females enjoying positions of importance because of their ability and intellectual pursuits.

She called upon the female members of the society to realise their responsibility in educating children and to train them as citizens of tomorrow.

Ms Saeeda Gazdar and Saeed Raza Saeed recited their poems reflecting the feelings of women in our society.

The Pakistan Women Lawyers Association at another meeting expressed concern over the proposed amendments in the Law of Evidence as recommended by the Majlis-i-Shoora.

A resolution adopted at the meeting said that the amendment will amount to relegating women to pre-Islamic status.

Agencies add: Speaking at the International Women's Day meeting organised by the Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami last evening the Sind Social Welfare Minister, Begum Tazeen Faridi underlined the need for creating awareness, based on Islamic values, and education among the people to bring about a genuine understanding of rights, duties and status of both women and men in the society.

The Minister said, in fact men and women were equal with regard to status and capabilities. In this regard she advised the Muslims to be aware of Islamic history and study the Holy Quran and Ahadith so as to apprise themselves about the teachings of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him).

Mr Inamullah Khan of Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, Mr Justice (Retd) Qadeeruddin Ahmad speaking on the occasion, dispelled the notion that women did not enjoy rights in Pakistan. He said women in Pakistan were given jobs of Ministers, and other top positions. He said only recently the Federal Shariah Court had given a ruling that a woman could become Qazi and Judge in the country.

MORE AID FOR NWFP, BALUCHISTAN DEMANDED

Karachi DAWN in English 10 Mar 83 p 8

[Text]

PESHAWAR, March 9: Mr. Nabi Baksh Zehri, Chairman Pakistan Rabita Council, has called for increased Federal assistance to the NWFP and Baluchistan for the development of these two provinces in view of heavy burden on them due to presence of Afghan refugees.

He expressed the hope that the Afghan refugees would be able to return to their homeland with honour and dignity as soon as the situation normalised there.

He said the main objective of Pakistan Rabita Council was restoration of democracy in the country through peaceful means. Mr Zehri questioned the approach of MRD towards its declared goal saying that MRD had not been able to achieve anything in the last two years. He advised the MRD leadership to desist from giving threats to

the Government. The country, he said, had been achieved through democratic process in the name of Islam and, therefore, both democracy and Islam should be introduced side by side.

He also advised the Government to make sincere efforts to restore democracy through elections. Mr Zehri reiterated his demand for revival of old Senate which should hold elections within six months of its revival. This would be a democratic method to restore democracy, he added. APP adds:

He appealed to President Gen. Zia-ul-Haq and Foreign Minister Sahibzada Yaqub Khan to exert their influence on the leadership of India to stop bloodshed of the Muslims in Assam. "If we were in India, we would have also faced with similar circumstances", he added.

CSO: 4600/448

INDEPENDENT PLANNING BODY'S MOTIVES ANALYZED

Karachi DAWN in English 10 Mar 83 p 11

[Article by Sultan Ahmed]

[Text]

"PLANNING, is too serious an exercise to be left to the national planners", said Dr. Mahbubul Haq, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, in October last, and called upon the nation to be drawn into that exercise.

That has, undoubtedly, led to a number of seminars all over the country, some with the guidance and assistance of the Planning Commission. Although persons sponsoring such seminars are non-officials or retired officials, many of the speakers have been officials.

Dr. Mahbubul Haq, too, has after making his breezy appeal to the nation gone back to the bureaucrats and set up a score or more of groups on the various sectors of the economy comprising mostly senior officials. He has done that not necessarily because he loves the bureaucratic brood but as that is the compulsion for anyone within the official set-up who wants to take any major initiative from Islamabad.

But one person who has taken Dr. Haq on his word is Dr. Mubashir Hasan. But he does not want to be part of the current planning action and come out with his own prescription for the sixth Five-Year Plan. Instead, he has set up an independent planning commission and got working on an alternative plan.

As chief of his own planning commission he has some advantages. He is operating in a very familiar area as he is a former Finance

Minister. As an engineer he is a technocrat who is known to a lot of technocrats who are willing to work with him. And he has the advantage of being close to a good many grass-roots political workers who are close to industrial and agricultural labour.

Dr. Mubashir says that the commission has been welcomed by Pakistanis within the country and outside, and offers of help have been received from planners, economists, engineers, bankers, educationists, industrialists, big and small agriculturists and a host of others.

Not in hurry

But while, if all goes well, Dr. Mahbubul Haq's Sixth Plan or its basic framework may be ready by the middle of the year, Dr. Mubashir's plan will not be ready before March or April, 1985. Having de-politicised himself after easing himself out of PPP, he is not a leader or planner in a hurry.

Will his plan be socialistic? No. He aims at preparing a plan for peace and love — two commodities in rather short supply," he says. Evidently, he is not thinking in terms of aggravating the class conflict. Instead, he is aiming at an economic system that can promote class harmony. He is firm that his planning commission "shall not be a political organisation and shall not seek political status or political power."

At the same time he wants a plan for the people by the people. It should be a "total plan" which should encompass the so-called de-

velopmental as well as non-developmental resources at the federal, provincial and local government levels and should be acceptable to the people of Pakistan as a whole and of the various regions. It should be a plan which they approve of and for which they are willing to work." He is also clear "the plan should be for the governments of the elected representatives of the people at the federal, provincial and local government levels.

That approach to planning clearly explains why he is not in a hurry to come out with an alternative plan within this year or to gun down or deflect the Plan that is being officially formulated.

But while his Independent Planning Commission will not come up with a critique of the sixth Plan when published, he himself may offer his comments on it through newspaper articles or other means. Who the members of the commission are has not been disclosed. Evidently, he does not want to do that until after he has been to all the major centres of the country and held discussions with a variety of people committed to the masses.

If his plan would not be ready until about the middle of 1985, does it mean that he does not expect a representative government until then? If he does not want to answer that question he can be excused. But if Dr. Mubashir is being cautious and wanting to take his own time to formulate a plan, Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, and now chief of his own Institute of Policy Studies, has come up with his own sixth five year plan.

Growth rates

While Dr. Haq's sixth Plan with an initially proposed outlay of Rs.525 billion two and a half times the current fifth Five-Year Plan outlay — was to increase annual growth by 6 to 7 per cent, Prof. Khurshid's plan would raise the annual growth to 8.5 per cent, and on a vastly reduced outlay of only Rs.335 billion.

Published details of his plan show that he would allocate Rs.78.4 billion for industries, Rs.27 billion for agriculture and Rs.230.2 billion for other sectors. If he can achieve an 8.5 per cent growth with an additional outlay of about 50 per cent over the current Plan, nothing can be better. But he has not been

able to convince anyone how he can mobilise even the reduced resources, and how that would give us an assured 8.5 per cent growth rate per year?

A basic question which Dr. Mubashir's proposal gives rise to is: what would happen to Dr. Mahbulbul Haq's Plan and Dr. Mubashir's plan if there is an elected government in Pakistan by 1985?

If that government does not approve of Dr. Haq's Plan, can it jettison it midway as it would have by then completed two or so years? It may not do that altogether. But Dr. Mubashir on his part is not dogmatic about his plan. He would be happy to let a future government adopt parts of his plan. In that way, the two plans can mesh or co-exist. Isn't Dr. Muhashir being unusually accommodative? He is, for he is wiser by his experience in and out of office.

"The central concept" around which Dr. Mubashir's plan is to be prepared will not be ready till the autumn this year. Meanwhile, the discussions will continue and they should prove extremely instructive to elements interested in both immediate economic survival and the future of the country.

The objectives of Dr. Mubashir's plan as listed on his "points for discussion" paper are indisputable and in conformity with national aspirations. Rapid economic growth, driving away vestiges of poverty, backwardness and oppression, development of adequate energy, promotion of mass literacy etc are the avowed aims of most of our five-year plans. So nobody can disagree with him in this regard. But what really matters is the will to achieve them, achieve them in spite of obstacles and resistance, in spite of the high cost that may have to be paid in the initial years, and the hardship or inconvenience that may be caused to the rich and the powerful — the owning and ruling classes.

Dr. Mubashir has not ignored national defence either. But he is not thinking in terms of merely more guns or better paid soldiers and officers, but of "strengthening the base of national defence". Strong economy, says the paper, "means strong defence potential, but economic development of Pakistan should also specifically aim at creating conditions that discourage foreign intervention in the affairs

of Pakistan."

Womanpower

His paper makes specific mention of developing womanpower without making any direct mention of manpower. Evidently he attaches tremendous importance to the large role women can play in development of the economy in contrast to the present when only 4.3 per cent of the women are involved in economic activities, while the percentage among men is 52.

Dr. Mubashir is keen that his plan must aim "at reducing to a minimum the drain of national wealth to foreign countries through unequal terms of trade and disadvantageous terms of financial and technological intercourse." But that is something which Pakistan cannot do alone. The Non-aligned Movement, the Group of 77, the U.N. and similar bodies have to work resolutely towards eliminating such unfair trade and other inequitous forms of economic exchanges. It is going to be a tough, long drawn and painful battle for the poor States against the rich.

But currently the problem the

country faces is the national wealth being drained away not only through low prices for its exports and very high prices for its imports, but also through the outflow of brainpower and skilled manpower. While the number of workers being tained is very small in the country, too many of the skilled and semi-skilled have been leaving the country. They help develop other countries and make them richer and send their money home.

As a result, Pakistan's own industries are starved of industrial workers and their growth is hampered. And on the other side, barely 14 per cent of the nearly 3.5 billion dollars coming into the country as money — through banking and non-banking channels — and as goods, is invested, and less than 2 per cent of that has gone into institutional investment. The result is a soaring inflation in the country.

Clearly far too many are the economic problems, old and new, that have to be debated in detail. And Dr. Mubashir's planning commission can certainly make a valuable contribution in that direction.

CSO: 4600/448

NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE SET UP

Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 83 p 7

[Text] MULTAN, March 21: Federal Minister for Local Bodies and Rural Development, Syed Fakhar Imam, has said that the Government has decided to end illiteracy in the country and in this connection a "National Education Committee" has been set-up under his own chairmanship.

Talking to newsmen at the airport here on Sunday evening, before flying back to Rawalpindi, he said that at present the rate of literacy is 23 per cent in the country and the Government has decided to increase the rate to 50 per cent during the next five year period.

As regards the forthcoming local bodies elections, he said that these will be held simultaneously on one and the same day all over the country, for which actual date will be announced later.

He said that the number of constituencies and councils will be increased to some extent due to new delimitation of local council area.

He said that necessary steps were being taken to set up industrial units in rural areas in the country he hoped that some units of such type will soon be set up on priority basis in suitable areas.

He said that the work of new Halqabandi (delimitation) is being started in the whole of the country from March 21.

Speaking at a meeting of minorities representatives in the Jinnah Hall here, President's Adviser for Minority Affairs, Mr M. P. Bhandara, called upon the minority people to maintain a spirit of brotherhood and unity among themselves and sincerely and honestly work for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

He disclosed that a proposal for creating a seat for minorities in the Cantonment Boards and also allocation of special employment quota in various government departments for minorities was under active consideration of the Government.

He further disclosed that a sum of Rs 63,000 will be provided to the District Minority Committee of Multan as the first instalment of the grant for educational stipends for deserving minority students.

The Summary Military Court No 78, Multan, has awarded one year rigorous imprisonment each to the patrons of the so-called Adara Khuddam-i-Khalq, Multan.

They included Begum Rasheeda Bano and her four associates, Mohammed Shafi, Mohammed Rafique, Shah Sawar and Karam Din under Section 420 CPC. Begum Rasheeda Bano has been ordered by the court to pay a fine of Rs 10,000 also in addition to one-year rigorous imprisonment.

The accused Mohammed Shafi and Shah Sawar had kidnapped five children, namely, Ejaz Hussain, Akhtar, Abdul Khaliq, Asfar and Khalid, and kept them under illegal custody.

CSO: 4600/478

CAUTION URGED IN GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF TEXT BOOK PUBLISHING

Karachi DAWN in English 10 Mar 83 p 11

[Editorial]

[Text]

THE Federal Ministry of Education's move to take over the responsibility of preparing, printing and distributing textbooks for primary classes in four provinces has touched off widespread criticism and concern. In pursuance of this decision, it is reported, Textbook Boards in Punjab, Sind, the NWFP and Baluchistan have been divested of the responsibility of preparing textbooks for Class I to Class III, except for mathematics, from the academic year beginning in April 1984. The step is stated to have been taken under the Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education Act, 1976. A proposal is also said to be under consideration for the creation of a National Board of Curricula and Textbooks to effect a systematic "federalisation of textbooks". This would obviously make the four Textbook Boards gradually redundant. For want of an elucidation from the Ministry of Education in Islamabad, it is not possible to comment on the official rationale for the new scheme. It is also not known how extensive the process will be and to what extent the proposed National Board of Curricula and Textbooks is to take over the functions of the four provincial Textbook Boards.

However, the wisdom of any such move would be seriously questioned. For one thing, there is not enough justification for extending the Federal authority to education which is and must remain a provincial subject. For another, if the purpose is to improve the standards of the lower primary textbooks, this certainly does not warrant federal intrusion into the area of textbook production. A better option is to take up the question of quality and production standards with the provincial Textbook Boards, rather than divesting them of their responsibility in the matter.

Admittedly our textbooks for the lower classes leave a lot to be desired. Many of them are plainly sub-standard, in terms of both contents and diction as well as in regard to the general scheme of presentation. They are generally dull and unimaginative, lacking in a scientific approach. Some of them also contain errors and inaccuracies which impair their value as textbooks. But all this would not vindicate the reported Federal move. A correct approach will be to lay down appropriate criteria and guidelines for the provincial Textbook Boards and insist on strict compliance with those in producing textbooks. The au-

thorities might also consider allowing private publishers to produce textbooks according to given guidelines for consideration along with those produced by the Boards themselves. This will surely introduce an element of competition, which is vital for improving standards.

On the other hand, the policy of shifting responsibility in case of any operational failure is likely to prove counter-productive and will not lead to the expected results. Education particularly is a sector in which improved performance must be ensured at successive levels without resorting to any trial-and-error methods. Critics of the federalisation move also argue that the 1976 Act of Parliament aims only at coordinating standards and does not empower the Federal Ministry to prepare, print and distribute textbooks for the provinces. The argument that the proposed step would also affect the use of local traits of culture and traditions and languages as recognised instructional tools and material is also worth considering. At least at the primary stage, children remain firmly rooted in their restricted social and cultural environment and can learn better with the help of motifs and references they can easily relate to.

If properly enunciated, a grounding of this kind can truly facilitate the formation of a robust national identity and outlook. We would, thus, urge the Federal Education Ministry to clarify the position and revise any plans that may have been devised to curtail the area of the provincial Textbook Boards' operation. At the same time, we hope, it will initiate measures to improve the quality of the textbooks being produced in the four provinces.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES OF DOMESTIC RESOURCE BASE ANALYZED

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Mar 83 p I & IV

[Article by Syed Mahdi Mustafa]

[Text] WHILE EVALUATING the Performance of the Second Five-year-Plan, the planners had come to the conclusion that much of the industrial development during 1960-65 was "imported" in the sense that value-added in the industrial sector was represented largely by the value of machinery and capital goods, as also raw materials for industrial goods, that were imported during the Second Plan period.

One is inclined to think that the growth rates which have been achieved by the economy during the last five years represent a similar situation.

Although the ratio of our total external debt repayable in foreign exchange to GNP has come down from 44.47 per cent in 1976-77 to 30.28 per cent during 1981-82, in terms of quantum it has increased during the period from \$6.341 mil-

lion to \$9.500 million (inclusive of net debt relief). This is considered to be an exceptionally high debt liability in all official and World Bank studies.

Our debt servicing liability at \$631 million during 1981-82 neutralised 25.73 per cent of our

total export earnings, when the level of 15 per cent is considered to be a safe margin.

GDP-savings ratio

Vigorous efforts have been made in the past to decrease our dependence on external assistance and to increase the flow of internal resources in our development. The results of these efforts have, however, been fairly disappointing. Our gross domestic savings as a per cent of GDP actually came down from 7.72 during 1976-77 to 5.14 per cent during 1981-82. The level of national savings as a proportion of GNP, however, went up from 10.98 per cent during 1976-77 to 11.51 per

cent during 1981-82.

This increase, however, needs to be viewed in the background of the use of workers' remittances. Foreign remittances that we receive are computed as part of savings in our computation of national savings. But this is a misleading way of computing the level of national savings, as the Governor of the State Bank had also pointed out.

According to current estimates almost 63 per cent of foreign remittances is used for current consumption while 23 per cent is invested in real estate; only 14 per cent is productively invested. Thus, if the expenditure on current consumption and unproductive investments in real estate are excluded, the level of national savings would come down sharply.

It is high time to analyse why the level of domestic savings is as low

as it is and what measures can be introduced to raise it. Even in a country like India whose per capita income is lower than that of Pakistan, the domestic savings as a present of GDP hovers around 18 per cent.

Two factors

In any analysis of domestic savings, two issues are of crucial importance. First, an individual's capacity to save which would be directly dependent upon the per capita income. Second, the availability of instruments of saving. Pakistan's per capita income during 1981-82 was estimated at Rs 3,706.

The urban per capita income during the year is estimated at over Rs 8,000 whereas the rural per capita income, despite the impact of the foreign remittances to the tune of \$2,394 million, is estimated at just over Rs 2,000.

We can, thus, immediately see that the capacity of the urban population to save is much greater than that of rural population. The rural sector in Pakistan is also characterised by a non-monetised sector so that even the availability of adequate instruments of savings does not necessarily lead to investment.

If one were to examine the availability of the instruments of savings in the economy, one would come to the conclusion that they are not only adequate but their multiplicity has been so designed as to meet the investment requirements of almost any class of people.

True, some of these investment schemes are tilted in favour of urban investors. But, it does not mean that instruments for investment even in the rural sector are not sufficient.

The instruments

For fixed investments, we have an attractive instrument in the shape of National Defence Certificates; for meeting the requirement of periodical returns, there is the

Khas Deposit Scheme. Recently, the Government has introduced another innovation in the Khas Deposit Certificates in which profits on investments made in foreign exchange would be payable in foreign exchange.

A vast network of nationalised commercial banks in the country, whose total branch network is now represented by 52 per cent in the rural sector, offers a number of savings schemes, particularly in fixed deposits. The savings schemes of post offices, another attractive instrument, allow frequent operations on the account with a high rate of return. The returns on various investments in insurance are also very attractive.

It is generally agreed that there is no dearth of schemes for investment. The inadequate level of savings, therefore, needs to be explained with reference to other factors. Experts are of the opinion that while the urban population is fairly aware of the types of savings schemes and the benefits accruing from them, such knowledge is generally not available in the rural sector. Combined with the lack of awareness is the low per capita income of the rural population.

Rural sector

If domestic savings are to be increased, the resources available at the household level in the rural sector will have to be given greater attention than in the past. It is here that the real potential lies.

The low educational level of the rural population is also a limiting factor. Rural people are unwilling to exchange simple pieces of paper with their hard cash. They still prefer to invest in real estate, land and

gold, instead of the various securities offered by governmental agencies. For mobilising larger savings from the rural sector, this attitude also needs to be changed. Since such a change in the attitude of mind is directly dependent upon the educational level, it seems highly probable that this would not be forthcoming in the near future.

Savings can be both voluntary and involuntary. The aspects of voluntary savings has already been discussed. In the case of involuntary savings, which is the result of taxation, the Government has made some headway, but this does not seem to have met with as much success as would otherwise be desirable. Our tax-GDP ratio is still very low at 13.70 per cent, estimated for 1981-82. This is, nevertheless, a considerable improvement from 11.43 per cent during 1976-77.

The Government has tried to increase the level of taxes through an increase in personal taxes and also through indirect taxes. The level of direct taxes on income and wealth has increased by 244.56 per cent between 1976-77 and 1981-82. The level of indirect taxes comprising customs, excise duties, sales tax, etc., has increased by 174.73 per cent during the same period, the highest increase of 206.73 per cent having come from customs duties.

As the level of tax is being increased it is also being made more progressive. Direct taxes as percentage of total tax revenue have increased from 16.10 per cent during 1976-77 to 21.16 per cent during 1981-82. The scope for increasing the proportion of direct taxes to the tax base is still considerable provided the various tax evasions are plugged. This can come about only by tightening and streamlining the taxes on professionals and traders. It is here that the greatest evasion of taxes apparently takes place.

Any effort at improving the level of domestic resources will have to be directly related to the rate of return that an investment offers as well as to the level of inflation within which such a return is available. Although our official rate of inflation is in the region of 10 per cent currently, the effects of disguised inflation add at least 50 per cent to this level of open inflation.

Savings are also related to the consumption habits of a society and Pakistan has now been ascertained to be a very "consumption-oriented" society. Effective steps will have to be taken to neutralise the demonstrative effects of conspicuous consumption.

The phenomenon of low domestic savings in Pakistan is, therefore, not only economic but also social in character. If its level is to be increased, attention will have to be paid to the economic as well as to the social characteristics of the economy before any satisfactory results can be obtained.

EXPORT-ORIENTED INDUSTRIES TO GET PREFERENCE

Karachi DAWN in English 10 Mar 83 p 8

[Text] FAISALABAD, March 9: Export-oriented projects and those industries which aim at developing alternative means of energy would be given preference in the Sixth Five-Year Plan.

This was stated here on Tuesday by Federal Minister for Industries Elaini Bakhsh Soomro while addressing the members of the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

With a view of restoring the confidence of the private sector entrepreneurs he reaffirmed the assurance of the Government that no further nationalisation will be enacted. As regards the new labour policy, the Minister said that the major concern of the Government was to promote mutual understanding. This object he said, had been

achieved to a great extent.

Earlier, the President of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that in case the Government agreed to give suitable land to the Chamber for setting up a large industrial estate in Faisalabad, the members of the Chamber and the local entrepreneurs will bear all development expenses. The Minister asked the Chamber to point out some suitable land for the purpose and assured them full support from the Government. APP adds:

Power looms

Referring to crisis in small scale industrial concern of power looms, he said, the Government would do its best to solve the problems of the owners. The Minister called for

reasonable suggestions from them.

Regarding the establishment of industrial estates in private sector, he said the Government had already allowed to establish industries manufacturing electric generators with a voltage of over 600 and some concessions were also being extended.

When asked about the load-shedding, he said the problem would continue for some time more and the industrialists had been advised to make their own arrangements of electricity during the shutdown period.

He pointed out that the Government has announced concessions like duty-free and tax exemption for the investors in backward or far-flung areas, of the country. — APP

CSO: 4600/448

IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASE IN FOREIGN AID DISCUSSED

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Mar 83 p I & IV

[Article by M. Ziauddin]

[Text] INFORMED circles in Islamabad are highly optimistic about Pakistan's aid prospects for the next financial year. They are certain that the country would be able to obtain increased aid commitments from bilateral and multilateral sources for the year 1983-84.

The Aid-to-Pakistan Consortium, which will scrutinise Pakistan's application for enhanced aid in April, is likely to commit by June this year at least 1.7 billion dollars in assistance — nearly 500 million dollars more than the commitments made for the current year.

Bilateral aid from the USA for the year is already earmarked in the 3.2 billion dollar aid package. This is likely to be in the vicinity of 200 million dollars, excluding the commitments under PL 480 programme.

West Germany and Japan, which have in recent years almost doubled their aid to Pakistan over their commitments prior to 1980, are expected to continue to adhere to their generous policies. And aid flow from Pakistan's Middle East friends, despite the slump in oil market, are likely to continue unabated.

These informed circles, however, do not see any possibility of Pakistan getting a short-term or long-term debt rescheduling facility because of the creditors' own preoccupation with high debt countries like Brazil, Argentina and Mexico to prop up whose

economies is considered to be the first prerequisite for sustaining the so-called economic recovery of the North.

According to economic experts, the enhanced flow of aid, most of which would carry high interest rates and would be linked to specific projects, would not only add substantially to the country's debt burden which has already shot up to 12 billion dollars, but would further enhance Pakistan's dependence on external sources and suck it more into the North's economic chaos which gives no hint of clearing despite the claims of the recovery having begun.

These experts, however, do not dispute the short-term positive, though cosmetic, effect of the enhanced flows of assistance on domestic economy. Since most of the assistance would be attached to the condition of increased imports from the aid givers, the import component would overwhelmingly distort the overall growth figure, making it look as robust as it was during the previous four years, but in the process nullifying in real terms the positive gains made in regard to self-sufficiency attained in a number of items.

Economists, who keep a close watch on international trends, believe that as the recovery of North (which they elect to describe as "so called") gains its artificial momentum there would be increased pressure on countries like Pakistan to import more from the

developed countries. On the other hand, according to these experts the pressure from creditors for timely repayment on countries like Pakistan, which earn a substantial amount of petrodollars through their emigrant workers in oil producing countries, will mount sharply.

Creditors' pressure

This would happen, they said, because the creditors would be under pressure to keep afloat the economies of high debt countries through ad hoc relief and increased assistance. And while the creditors would be busy throwing good money after bad money in the hope of making up in the long run, countries like Pakistan would be engaged in paying these creditors from their hard earned dollars and interest bearing loans for unwanted projects and uneconomic imports.

Illustrating the point further, these experts said that with a little bit of effort Pakistan could become self-sufficient in edible oil and save a lot of foreign exchange. But due to an incomprehensible policy, no proper attention has so far been paid to this aspect. They agreed that domestically cultivated soyabean and sunflower would render the prices of locally manufactured edible oil uncompetitive in the international market but in their opinion the overall economic benefit accruing from the saving of a substantial amount of foreign exchange would offset this cost.

In this respect, they pointed to the prices of domestically produced sugar and fertilisers and said

that though these prices are too high, compared to the international prices of these items, still the savings in the foreign exchange which otherwise would have been spent on imports had enabled the country to keep its balance of payment position under controllable limits.

Similarly, they said the expected savings of about 200 million dollars in foreign exchange with the commissioning of the steel mill would more than nullify the high cost of domestic production of steel products.

In the opinion of these experts, the exporters of edible oil were keeping the prices of their item depressed in order to discourage the importers from acquiring their own edible oil manufacturing capacities. These experts also hint at a collusion between the official policymakers and the international middle-man selling edible oil to the world. They thought this aspect was actually keeping the country from paying proper attention to domestic production of the item of such common use and of such high cost in foreign exchange.

A case of collusion?

Turning to the prospects of exports for the next year, these experts warned that the terms of trade would deteriorate further in the coming months for primary goods, and for manufactured and semi-manufactured goods the market will further shrink in response to hardening of protectionist measures by the North which is convinced that it can maintain its so-called artificial recovery by slashing imports and pushing up exports.

Thus, falling exports, burgeoning imports and mounting debt servicing and repayment obligations are expected to widen to current account deficit of the country by another billion dollars by the end of fiscal 1984, with no real improvement in the domestic economy in sight. If, in the meanwhile, the Gulf states decide to trim their development plans to fit in with the reduced income from oil and lay off

emigrant workers on a massive scale, Pakistan's economy will certainly take a nose dive.

Knowledgeable circles note with suspicion the over-enthusiasm of some responsible people with regard to the expected world economic recovery. The utterings

of these responsible people, these circles pointed out, appeared to be directed at deluding the nation into thinking that with the so-called recovery of world economy, Pakistan's own economy would experience an upturn.

It is believed that in the short run these enthusiasts would appear to have been proved right because the enhanced flow of aid would cover up the real structural weaknesses of domestic economy. But in the long run, these experts apprehended, the nation might be called to pay a very costly price for the nearsightedness of these people.

Unrealistic picture

These circles believe that some interested persons were deliberately depicting an unrealistic picture of the domestic economy and conjuring up a make-believe prosperity in order to saddle the nation with an unattainable mid-term Plan which these experts suspect would be totally unrelated to national aspirations. They said,

such a plan would not only wash off whatever gains the nation had made during the last 10 years in agriculture and industry but probably would also uproot the very trends which enabled the country to make these gains.

In this respect, they pointed to the overemphasis being given to the role of private sector in the forthcoming Plan. They said that even in the Second Plan, which was supposed to have given every encouragement to the private sector, its allocated share was not more than 40 per cent. Besides, the natural incentives available to the private sector in the 1960s in a fast growing world economy do not exist in the recession-hit world economy of the 1980s, they added.

In view of this, these experts believe, it would be totally unrealistic to allow the share of the private sector in the Sixth Plan to expand

more than its Fifth Plan size. In fact, they said, the present economic compulsions make it imperative that the public sector role is expanded to urgently fill the gaps created in various sectors and sub-sectors by the absence of private sector activity throughout the current Plan period.

RAILWAYS MINISTER CRITICIZED FOR 'PIOUS LIES'

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 18 Feb 83 p 5

[Editorial: "The Railways Minister's Pious Inaccuracies"]

[Text] Said Qadir, the minister of railways, says that rail fares have not been increased, just "rounded off" to end mismanagement and simplify accounting. Commenting on Mumtaz Ahmad Tarar's motion for adjournment in the Advisory Council, Said Qadir said that fares had not been increased but that the idea had not been rejected out of hand.

We would describe the railways minister's statement in the Advisory Council as a pious misrepresentation of the facts. He says that fares have been rounded off to end mismanagement. The manner in which he has obfuscated a fare increase by calling it a rounding off is not the kind of statement expected from a responsible minister. In simple terms, a shortage of funds has been made good; in other words, the budget for rail fares was in the red and is now in the black. But in the rounding off, fares of 1 rupee 30 pisas were not rounded off to 1 rupee and fares of 1 rupee 90 pisas to 2 rupees; rather, an increase was made in each case. Fares of 1 rupee 30 pisas and 1 rupee 90 pisas were both increased to 2 rupees. If this is not an increase, what else is it?

This increase in fares that the minister is not prepared to call an increase will add millions of rupees to railway revenues. Four hundred thousand passengers travel by Pakistan railways daily. If, by this rounding off, each passenger has to pay 40 pisas extra in fares, the railways earn an extra 58.4 million rupees annually. If, after making passengers pay nearly 60 million rupees in extra fares each year, the railways minister says that fares have not been increased, what can one call it but misrepresentation? We called it "pious" because it was uttered before a full session of the "pious Advisory Council."

Making misleading statements seems to be becoming customary for the railway minister. Over the past few months, he has been announcing with great conviction that rail fares would not be increased. He does not agree that a fare increase was made under the guise of a fare round-off; and now he says that although fares have not been increased, the idea has not been rejected. This statement implies that the announcements that fares would definitely not be increased have been scrapped, and now one should be prepared to hear at

any moment that a horrendous increase has been made in rail fares. We say horrendous because a rise of several pisas in fares, which brings millions in extra revenue, is not an increase in the minister's eyes but is merely a measure aimed at ruining the passengers' budget and straightening out the railways.' The minister's misleading statement came to light when he was announcing that a reduction in the number of railway employees was neither planned nor expected to take place; but at the same time, department officials were corresponding and issuing guidelines for preparing lists of surplus employees to be laid off. JASRAT provided documentary proof of this activity and published a letter in which directives were clearly issued to prepare lists of nonessential employees to be laid off. At that time an effort was made to justify the lie by taking refuge in a meaningless phrase such as "rounding off."

We ask the president. If his responsible ministers are allowed to make misleading statements so openly, what standard of truth will be left in the country? Governments lose credibility and respect because of just such statements. We wish that the president would realize the poverty and shortcoming of his government as far as truthfulness is concerned.

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BUILDING OF LAUNCHES, SHIPS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES BEING NEGOTIATED

Karachi DAWN in English 9 Mar 83 p 12

[Text]

Negotiations are being held between Pakistan and three other countries for building a cargo ship and several launches, ferry boats and tugs in Pakistan, informed sources said.

They said Bangladesh was interested in a 13,000 DWT cargo vessel; Burma wanted the KSEW to build six harbour and pilot launches and two 300 BHP harbour tugs; and Sudan had shown interest in twin-screw harbour and ferry boats.

In the current recession, gripping the ship-building industry, Pakistan would do well to secure these orders, officials said.

While prospects for these shipping orders are bright, official sources said Pakistan's general export of engineering goods had also shown signs of an upturn, and in the first six months of the current fiscal year, goods worth Rs. 150 million

had been exported.

These included a Rs. 50 million export contract for supply and erection of transmission towers to Sri Lanka and Rs. 20 million worth of bicycles to Uganda, besides two contracts worth Rs. 50 million for transmission lines supply and erection in Saudi Arabia.

Products of the Pakistan Steel, specially pig-iron, was also a major export item being negotiated with various countries, including 10,000 metric tonnes for the United Arab Emirates and 17,500 metric tons for Bangladesh.

Saudi Arabia, the sources said, wanted to buy automobile spare parts from Pakistan, a new item which has a great potential for export; while Iran had shown interest in road building machinery. Somalis were likely to purchase complete sugar plants of 10 to 15 tons capacity.

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PAKISTAN

BRIEFS

KHAKSAR PARTY JOINING MRD--Lahore, March 21: A faction of the defunct Khaksar Movement, headed by the widow of its founder, Begum Saeeda Al-Mashriqi, has decided to join the MRD. This was decided at a meeting of party's central leadership held here on Monday with Begum Saeeda Al-Mashriqi in the chair. The meeting also decided to send a delegation to talk to MRD leadership and empowered the head of the Khaksar Movement, Begum Saeeda Al-Mashriqi, to take final decision in this regard.--PPI. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 83 p 3]

PALIJO'S RELEASE DEMANDED--A number of journalists, poets and writers have demanded immediate release of Mr. Rasool Bukhsh Palijo, a prominent writer and advocate, arrested on Oct. 16, 1979. Over 46 signatories in a joint Press statement said that Mr. Palijo is being detained further without trial though he has already completed his one year sentence awarded by the Special Military Court of Badin and paid a fine of Rs. 30,000. The signatories demanded that he should be tried in an open court if there were other charges against him. Signatories include Messrs Minhaj Barna, Ajmal Dehlavi, Abdul Hameed Chapra, Gurudas Wadhwani, Ghazi Salahuddin, Siddiq Baluch, Ali Ahmad, A. S. Nizamani, etc. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 22 Mar 83 p 10]

FORMER GENERAL'S BOOK--ISLAMABAD, March 7--A book entitled "My version--India-Pakistan War 1965", written by Gen (retd) Mohammad Musa, Commander-in-Chief Pakistan Army from 1958 to 1966 will be on sale shortly, it was announced today. The book, which consists of 125 pages, 10 photographs, three maps and three appendices, aims at clearing some of the misconceptions about the 1965 war and the reason for some of the major decisions taken before and during the war. An Urdu edition is also to be printed shortly. [Karachi DAWN in English 8 Mar 83 p 8]

SUGAR, RICE EXPORT POTENTIAL--LAHORE, March 9--The Federal Minister for Food, Vice Admiral M. F. Janjua said here on Tuesday that Pakistan had made a big headway in the production of sugar as it had now a ready exportable surplus of three to four lakh tons of the commodity. Talking to newsmen he said only three years ago Pakistan was importing sugar to meet its requirement but it was now in a position to be in the world export market. He said Pakistan was now third after the USA and the USSR in the export of cotton in the world market and for rice export it was only behind the USA and Thailand. "We had a record production of about 47 lakh bales of cotton last year due to various incentives and long term planning measures taken by the Government," he added. [Karachi DAWN in English 10 Mar 83 p 3]

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